Paranoia in American literature and culture.

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PARANOIA

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THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis assesses the concept of *paranoia* in relation to American culture and literature of the past four hundred years. *paranoia* is traced through a history of the discourses of science and culture which is extended into analyses of selected fears and anxieties manifested in American literature. The concept and diagnosis of *paranoia* is seen ultimately to register a vital ambivalence about the uses of power and the systematization of knowledge.

The introduction and Chapter One assess the links between the concept of *paranoia* and myth, religion and rational science, particularly the mental sciences and their nosological drives, whilst identifying the paranoid energies at work within the political uses of reason, up to the nineteenth-century. Chapter Two explores the emergence of American cultural prerogatives for fear and anxiety expressed in the writings of Charles Brockden Brown in an immediate post-revolutionary scenario, drawing on materials related to Puritanism, early American psychology, disease, and social and political deviance. Chapter Three continues the history of discourses up to the present, focusing on the refinement of the concept of *paranoia* in the mental sciences since the rise of psychoanalysis. Chapter Four traces the intensities of *paranoia* in post-1945 American culture and literature, drawing on the work of Thomas Pynchon as an exemplary analyst of the fascination for political conspiracy and manipulation of fear and anxiety. Chapter Five uses Hubert Selby and Robert Duncan to explore two different literary approaches reaching beyond the enclosures of *paranoia*, celebrating in particular Duncan's efforts to utilize a poetics of *creative paranoia*.

In conclusion, the destructive elements of *paranoia* which have been encouraged in certain ways in American culture are adjudged susceptible to the mediating and transformative effects of poetics extending from the very principles on which the United States were founded.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

paranoia

paranoia
...[mod.L.a.Gr. παράνοια, f. παράνο-ος distracted, f. παρα- beside + νό-ος, νοῦς mind.] Mental derangement; *spec.* chronic mental unsoundness characterized by delusions or hallucinations, esp. of grandeur, persecution, etc. The various forms of the disorder are now usu. considered as belonging to the schizophrenic group of mental illness. Also in trivial use.[1]

paranoia
...(features) gradually developing, systematized delusional states, without hallucinations but with preservation of intelligence, and with emotional responses and behaviour that remain congruous with and appropriate to the persecutory or grandiose delusions.[2]

They, the Greeks, would never have thought about calling these Hosts schizophrenic or catatonics, which were after all their own words. Paranoia and the like were clinical Atonist words invented by people who having lost the knowledge of what they were doing just kinda threw these terms out there.[3]

This dissertation intends to trace the theoretical and other dimensions given to the concept of *paranoia* in certain discourses of European, and specifically American, cultures. It will be argued that *paranoia* has developed a peculiar intensity and discursive impact within the hegemonies operating inside these cultures, these effects indicating destructive and endlessly reproducing fears within and about the uses of

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[1]Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford 1989), Vol.XI, p.201. The citation of historical use extends from: "**1811** R. Hooper *Lexicon Medicum* 596/2 *Paranœa*, alienation of the mind; defect of judgement" to "**1977** *Time* 16 May 56/3 They constitute what has become a standard trip down paranoia lane."

[2]R. J. Campbell, Psychiatric Dictionary (Oxford 1981), p.442.

[3]Ishmael Reed, Mumbo Jumbo (New York 1972), p.194.

power in any political circumstance. Selected elements within American literature and culture will provide the main territory of analysis, which will focus in particular on the ways Americans have perceived themselves, their culture, and threats to their existence in the past four hundred years. The approach will proceed from two mutually reinforcing fields of enquiry: a history of discourses will endeavour to trace the usage of the term *paranoia*, alongside and in alignment with a cultural and literary analysis, showing how medicine and the human sciences have accumulated and refined the discourses linked to the paranoid concept into charged systems of knowledge and apprehension.

The tracing of *paranoia* and the cultural and clinical use of the term effectively follows the historical perceptions of madness, where *paranoia* is part of the corpus of insanities set aside for political reasons. The earliest known use of the term asserts *paranoia* in the form of a holistic referentiality, whereas today *paranoia* has assumed different levels and intensities of meaning within different contexts of use, particularly as, at one and the same time, the term attempts a concise clinical definition, and a sense as an amorphous social phenomenon. In its movement towards these different referentialities, *paranoia* has retained close links to the concepts of madness, and their formulations of meaning and terminology, whilst extending itself to locate something more in the shifting boundaries between sanity and insanity. Essentially, *paranoia* has moved from its initial status as a descriptive term for insanity, through the manipulations of madness, to intersect with some specific concepts of insanity whose peculiarity lies in their articulation of an authoritarian control which reflexively includes itself both as an ordering principle and as a threat. Consequently, the locations in which the meanings of *paranoia* occur are those productive of a

fundamental ambivalence about power, an ambivalence which simultaneously generates a desire for empowerment with a fear of being the subject of some form of power, particularly power of an unknown origin or energy, about which the paranoid perception seeks knowledge.

The genesis of *paranoia* can be found in fear, where human beings' earliest intellectual formations combined perceptions of external threat with their accumulating abilities to structure emotional process:

> The search for a cause (of fear and death) has led man to suspect the sun, moon, stars, animals, ghosts, ancestors and family members. Intense fear produced generalizations attributing to these entities not only the cause of disease but other misfortunes. Thus in his demonology primitive man attributed to nonhuman and even inanimate nature his own human motivations and methods—an early but vivid illustration of projective reasoning.[4]

Notwithstanding the problems involved in using the term "primitive man," the first thing that needs to be addressed in dealing with such a definition of *paranoia*, and those used as epigraphs to this introduction, is the stress placed on *suspicion*. It is from this basis that the authoritarian impulse to judge delusion or hallucination as such proceeds, utilizing an implicit sense that no qualitative fixity or substance attends the belief in question. Quite the opposite occurs, in fact, reflecting diagnostic certainties back at themselves: the only certain aspect of *paranoia*, and any origins it may have in fear, myth and religion, is that *paranoia* is not suspicion or superstition, but certainty and conviction, about which people have proof. The designation "superstition" rules out effective concentration on *real* threats, and vice versa, the clear distinction between these elements being part of political structures and their operation. In this important sense, then, psychiatric theory becomes an action focused

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[4]David Swanson, Philip Bohnert and Jackson Smith, The Paranoid (New York 1970), p.23.

on *realities needing control*.[5]

In this passage the writers use arguments developed by Freud in Totem and Taboo (1913) and elsewhere to explain the animistic processes of the "primitive" mind in relation to the organization of rituals and religion. The focus by Freud and James Frazer in The Golden Bough (1890–1915) on primitivism and instinct in itself registers contemporary fears about energies considered to be latent and threatening to "orders of civilization," particularly in fears located around proletarian energy whose control remained essential to the expansion of imperialist industrialization into the twentieth century. The structuring of fear and anxiety is codified, as it always has been, for such control, and particularly, as we shall see, in the mechanisms of *paranoia*. Discussing one of these mechanisms, Freud writes:

> The projection outwards of internal perceptions is a primitive mechanism, to which, for instance, our sense perceptions are subject, and which therefore normally plays a very large part in determining the form taken by our external world. Under conditions whose nature has not yet been sufficiently established, internal perceptions of emotional and intellective processes can be projected outwards in the same way as sense perceptions; they are thus employed for building up the external world, though they should by rights remain part of the *internal* world. This may have some genetic connection with the fact that the function of attention was originally directed not towards the internal world but towards the stimuli that stream in from the external world, and that that function's only information upon endopsychic processes was received from feelings of pleasure and unpleasure.[6]

The concept of projection has thus, theoretically at least, been identified as a formative

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[5]In this sense, it is worth remembering Karl Popper's stress on the *mythological* dimensions of Freud and Adler's theories: "As for Freud's epic of the Ego, the Super Ego, and the Id, no substantially stronger claim to scientific status can be made for it than for Homer's collected stories from Olympus." Karl Popper, Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge (New York 1962), p.37–38.

[6]Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics (1913) in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London 1957), Volume XIII, p.64.

action in the evolution of intellective process, as well as being central to *paranoia*, both historically and as a point at which boundaries are crossed between internal and external, normal and aberrant behaviour, sanity and insanity. Psychoanalytic theory asserts projection as a mechanism by which the ego protects itself against conflicts within the unconscious by attributing to external subjects, objects, or phenomena, the motives, attitudes, or problems which are in fact present, but deliberately unrecognized, in the unconscious. There is a very real sense in which these transfers of energies between the inner and outer set up the psychodynamic tensions which characterize *paranoia* in its modern dimensions, reinforcing the sense in which David Shapiro asserts that projection "is so central to our understanding of paranoid pathology and symptoms that it has almost come to define what is called 'paranoid' in psychiatry."[7] While this is undisputed, it is necessary to remember that projection as an explanatory mechanism, asserted by Freud, Shapiro and others as fundamentally "unexplained," also acts as an assembled medium used to validate psychiatry's (and other doxa's) identifications of the origins of distortion, aberration and untruth within the paranoid process. The issue that needs to be addressed in a cultural and historical sense, alongside the sickness and destruction of *paranoia*, is how a concept has been formulated to explain the political siting of perception, and the determinative processes identifying the qualities constituting inner and outer states. Perhaps an alternative to projection avoiding some of the emplaced meanings attached to the term may be suggested in the word *extension* which, aside from projection's meanings of "a jutting out," "a proposal for an undertaking" or "reading into a situation one's own feelings,"

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[7]David Shapiro, Neurotic Styles (New York 1965), p.68.

suggests an "added piece" or a "property of occupying space."[8]

The formulations of myth and religion, themselves involved intrinsically in the theory of projection, are also obviously elements of any history of *paranoia*, and these will be approached contextually within certain literary representations. For the moment, two alternative examples may be given to illustrate the potential presence of *paranoia* as a catalyst in structures of belief. C. R. Badcock, in his book The Psychoanalysis of Culture, examines the psychic dimensions of monotheistic religion, and using Freud's Moses and Monotheism and Totem and Taboo, as well as work done by James Strachey, isolates the Egyptian culture of the pharaoh Akhnaten and the Atenistic cult as an early example of how monotheism may extend from and reproduce individual and mass *paranoia*. What emerges as interesting are the involvement of paranoid tendencies in concentrations of consciousness on a singular non-anthropomorphic deity, and their manifestation in hierarchized sequences of imagery. In this latter case, the central image is that of the sun, or a singular energy source, emanating power in the form of rays, and Badcock quotes Strachey as evidence for his argument linking paranoid modes of thought historically through their image patterns, from Akhnaten through to the eponymous Freudian paranoid, Daniel Paul Schreber:

> But the Aten's intimate relations with Ahknaten are not merely paternal. It has not only procreated him; it enters into him and there creates ideas, thoughts, knowledge, which he then hands on to the rest of the world. The vehicle of the Aten's inspiration are its rays... (the) celebrated picture of the 'raying Aten' seen in countless drawings and

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[8]*Extension* was suggested by Eric Mottram in a conversation concerning projection and shifts in terminological meaning; subsequent research discovered a similar use by David Shapiro: "Projective ideas are not merely "expulsions" of unconscious thoughts or feelings onto external figures but extensions of the defensive relationship with such figures." David Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character (New York 1981), p.143.

> reliefs, is to my mind *the* pathognomic symptom of Akhnaten's case. These rays are the prototype of the various kinds of irradiations which have troubled paranoiacs through all the centuries and trouble them today.[9]

Notions of singular and central sources of penetrative energies or power, either visible or invisible, are invariably the framework of paranoid belief structures and inform those structures' grandiose or persecutory perceptions with degrees of political tension. Equally, isolating such image patterns can be a useful method in evaluating the potential or manifest *paranoia* of a social or cultural process, and may offer valuable interfaces in a similar analysis of literature.

The second example comes from the philosophy of Giambattista Vico (1688–1744) expounded in his La Scienza Nuova, published in Naples in 1725. Vico sought to build his philosophy by categorizing the evolution of human modes of belief, beginning with the effort to "enter through the force of our understanding, the nature of the first men."[10] Influenced in this initial stage by Lucretius's poem, 'On The Nature of the Universe,' which portrayed early humans drawn to a belief in deities through natural phenomena such as thunder, and the Epicurean notion that the origin of religion lay in primitive fears and anxieties, Vico identified the first stage of belief as the "superstitious."[11] Such perception emerged from early language and thought which Vico deemed to be structured poetically in its imaginative rather than rational thrust, as evidenced in the formation of ancient ritual, symbology and myth. Vico

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[9]James Strachey, 'Preliminary Notes Upon The Problem of Akhnaten' in International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 20, p.34.

[10]Giambattista Vico, New Science, translated by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca 1968), p.80.

[11]The other stages are, respectively, the heroic, exemplified in Homeric poetry, and the human, involving contemporary abilities of abstract thought.

believed a poetic logic emanated from a primitive, concrete and anthropomorphic thought process, in which "[w]hen men are ignorant of the natural causes producing things...they attribute their own nature to them."[12] His famous account of the invention of Jove, which so interested James Joyce, extends from this "poetic logic":

> ...the sky fearfully rolled with thunder and flashed with lightning (and early humans) were frightened and astonished by the great effect whose cause they did not know, and raised their eyes and became aware of the sky. And because in such a case the nature of the human mind leads it to attribute its own nature to the effect, and because in that state their nature was that of men all robust bodily strength, who expressed their very violent passions by shouting and grumbling, they pictured the sky to themselves as a great animated body, which in that aspect they called Jove...who meant to tell them something by the hiss of his bolt and the clap of his thunder.[13]

Viewed anthropomorphically, projection begins to assume its creative dimensions, both as a necessary technique induced by fear to avoid destruction, and as an embellishment of the external world as pattern and possibly as a basis for art. The implicit potential of *paranoia* within projection indicates that from this anthropomorphic angle elements of creativity may at some level utilize the energies or configurations offered by paranoid perception. This possibility will be explored in detail at the culmination of the thesis.

The bulk of the thesis, however, will be an analysis of the ways in which *paranoia* has manifested itself in American literature and culture, extending principally from an imperative of rationalization as it operates as a necessary energy for the consolidation of individual, state and global power. In his book, The American Ideology, H. T. Wilson has explored the ideological formulation and political pursuit

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[12]Vico, New Science, p.180.

[13]Vico, New Science, p.377.

of rationalization and domination within the dimensions of what has been termed the "open society." Wilson's focus is on the sociological and cultural theory emerging from the influential group of emigrés arriving in the United States after 1925, drawing from the work of the Frankfurt School and others as it extends from Hegel, Marx, and especially Weber. Indeed, Weber's assertion that rationalization "creates irrationalities with the certainty of a fate,"[14] becomes part of Wilson's argument that the United States has, since its colonial and revolutionary inceptions, come to be an exemplary site of rationalization and domination in its particular forms of cultural and political evolution. Wilson's premise will be a launching point for this dissertation as it extends into the scenario of dependence on or obsessive use of instrumental reason where, according to Max Horkheimer, "[p]aranoia, the madness that builds logically constructed theories of persecution, is not merely a parody of reason, but is somehow present in any form of reason that consists in the mere pursuit of aims."[15]

The history of discourses tracing the development of *paranoia* as a clinical and cultural term will demonstrate the problems and the paranoid potential involved in "critical rationalism as a scientific value which is committed to *beginning in* limit rather than ending by acknowledging it."[16] To go further than this, however, and to embrace and analyse American culture as more than simply paranoid, one can draw upon the materials available from a range of American writers whose energies have been directed at overcoming "the mere pursuit of aims" in an exploration of the limits

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[14]H.T.Wilson, The American Ideology: Science, technology and organization as modes of rationality in advanced industrial societies (London 1977), p.145.

[15]Max Horkheimer, The Eclipse of Reason (New York 1974), p.176.

[16]Wilson, The American Ideology, p.5.

of American experience and even beyond. The work of Charles Brockden Brown and Thomas Pynchon will be used for this analysis, for their writing extends from two formative periods in the evolution of American culture where the possibilities for expanding limits are addressed within the paranoid retrenchments that characterised the early years of the new Republic, and the decades following World War Two.

Before that challenge is taken up it is necessary to expand further on the notion of rationalization and how it may organise knowledge and foment *paranoia* within political process. Again, Wilson's appraisal of an "American ideology" is useful, where he asserts that:

> the open society model is revealed as the essence of the American ideology with all that this implies—limited tolerance, exchangism, 'free enterprise,' the subversion of citizenship by consumerism and the media, the eclipse of common-sense rationality by science and professionalism, and the subordination of politics and culture to instrumental rationality norms favouring systemic integration.[17]

From the outset, however, the late twentieth-century perspective Wilson adopts needs to be historicized with more depth and connected to the energies of fear and anxiety which underpin *paranoia*. Where fear and anxiety are engaged in the formulation of belief, a key strategy of political control has focused on a basic matrix in human awareness through which control may be effected. In consequence, the retention and operation of power has been inseparably linked to the manipulation of fear (specifically identified threat) and anxiety (ambiguous notions of threat) in subordinates and subordinate populations, as well as in those wielding power. In surveying this political process in the past five hundred years, one could examine some central assumptions of modern political theory by linking the following:

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[17]Wilson, The American Ideology, p.26.

Machiavelli's stress on the function of conspiracy in political process with Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan (1651), which states that "[d]uring the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called warre, as is of every man, against every man." One could then move on to the existential problems facing Ishmael aboard the Pequod and its command structure in Herman Melville's Moby Dick; Or, The White Whale (1851), the narrator deliberately named after the biblical figure whose "hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him." A more recent culmination could be arrived at in the circumstances in which late 1960's and early 1970's political tensions, according to Michel Foucault, intensified "the major enemy...the fascism in us all, in our heads and in our everyday behaviour, the fascism which causes us to love power, to desire the very thing that dominates and exploits us."[18] It is important, of course, to beware the tendency evident in Foucault's remarks here concerning belief in an inherent propensity in humanity toward fascism, especially where it may dangerously dehistoricize the debate, and it will be an important function of this dissertation to try to analyse what is already apparent in this sequence of writers: namely, a need for and investigation of secure definitions of human propensity inside different political imperatives of control and authority.

Two of the most prominent analysts of *paranoia* as a factor in the rationalising and fascistic energies within modern Western politics and culture have been Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. Horkheimer frames the evolution of reason in the following terms:

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[18]Michel Foucault, Introduction to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Anti–Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Volume One, translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (London 1984), p.xiii.

> "Reason" for a long period meant the activity of understanding and assimilating the eternal ideals which were to function as the goals for men. Today, on the contrary, it is not only the business but the essential work of reason to find means for the goals one adopts at any given time... Reason is considered to come into its own when it rejects any status as absolute ("reason" in the intensified sense of the word) and accepts itself simply as a tool.[19]

The analyses of the development and uses of reason in The Dialectic of Enlightenment, The Eclipse of Reason, and Critique of Instrumental Reason focus on three interlinked processes which have moved perception and strategies of belief into scenarios where suspicion and delusion become actualized and often necessary products of rational thought. These processes are, respectively, the separation experienced between human beings and nature seen as an inevitable result of the Enlightenment, the alienation suffered under the aegis of this division, and the efforts required from the individual inside these systems of thought to replace missing absolutes in terms of self-justification and legitimation. Adorno and/or Horkheimer note the movement from what is termed "primitive objectivization," the world experienced directly as prey or threat, through to the complexities of Enlightenment rationality determining nature as separate from civilization and the human, as being the catalyst for potential distortions of thought. In their terms consciousness of this separation effected within the systematizations of reason led to the social experience of alienation, which in turn allowed the advance of instrumental reason as a primary mode of social perception. The process contains within itself the energies of its own reproduction and emplacement since instrumental reason further promotes the effort to dominate the non-human, which must be paid for with the denial of human nature and other processes outside rationality.

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[19]Max Horkheimer, Critique of Instrumental Reason (New York 1974), p.vii.

The problem is one of security, as new forms of individual experience and control opened up by the use of reason create anxieties and displacements of the ego. This needs to be stressed to avoid the sense that reason in itself produces *paranoia*, that a system of thought generates problems prior to interaction with individual or mass perception. Reason, in the terms used here, offers the *possibility* of distortion or misapplication of sensibility as the effort to replace the sense of security formerly sought through connection to nature—an external absolute—finds itself in post–Enlightenment terms utilizing and enhancing the force and lubricity enabled through reason to attempt recognitions, justifications and legitimizations. In these circumstances, truth very quickly becomes a systematic function detached from any external affirmation or authority, and consequently perceptions derived through reason find themselves under pressure from the processes of their own formulation to assert an implicit truthfulness. Benjamin Franklin succinctly states the problem when he writes in his Autobiography, "So convenient a thing is it to be a *reasonable Creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for every thing one has a mind to do."[20]

In the conclusion to their Dialectic of Enlightenment, Horkheimer and Adorno take the political manifestation of reason to what they see as the logical conclusion implicit in its Enlightenment origins and subsequent practice. The dialectic of these tensions extending into the twentieth century is seen to lead directly to the priority of fascist order, and it is from this destiny, imaged most starkly in anti–semitism, that the pervasion of *paranoia* may be traced back into the functional perceptions allowed to individuals and their collectives in the post–Renaissance heritage. The argument occupies similar ground to that of Foucault's deliberations on a pervasive fascism, and

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[20]Benjamin Franklin, Autobiography (1771–1790; New York 1972), p.88.

also suffers, it must be said, from some of the same problems of totalizing definition:

> Objectifying (like sick) thought contains the despotism of the subjective purpose which is hostile to the thing and forgets the thing itself, thus committing the mental act of violence which is later put into practice. The unconditional realism of civilized humanity, which culminates in Fascism, is a special case of paranoiac delusion which dehumanizes nature and finally the nations themselves. Paranoia takes root in that abyss of uncertainty which every objectifying act must bridge.[21]

This last sentence forms the core of an argument which encompasses many diverse social elements. Horkheimer and Adorno correctly focus on the ways in which civilization has intensified the problem experienced by humanity in its attempts to mediate between "subjective purpose" and the impingement upon it of objective necessity, this latter force emerging in the range of existential possibilities provided by human ingenuity and organization. Underpinning all human endeavour, the "abyss of uncertainty" creates the constant necessity of affirmation which is sought outside the self in objective forms, a process which finds its impetus in reason to overcome fear in cycles of domination. The fear is of uncertainty and an unidentified Other, and this fear becomes *paranoia* as subjective apprehension transforms itself into objectifying recognitions, just as the self, confronted with the Other, may seek security in the certainties of fear rather than the degrees of ambiguity and self–immolation required in projects of unity and interaction.

This, in turn, provides the problem for creative endeavour in the realm of human activity: that humanity continues to choose the supposed securities of *paranoia* long after social and technological advancements have developed the potential for freedom from fear. Civilization at this juncture remains trapped inside the image of

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[21]Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment, translated by John Cumming (1944; first English translation 1972; London 1986), p.193.

the necessity of feeding upon itself, or suffering in spite of itself, as Freud determined in Civilization and Its Discontents. Horkheimer and Adorno explore the history of political thought in precisely these terms, whilst Jean–Paul Sartre explores what he suggests is a fascist logic inside certain forms of twentieth century perception, when he describes the anti–Semite and those who feel compelled to transform their anxieties into targeted hatred. The solace sought is a:

> longing for impenetrability... We have here a basic fear of oneself and of truth. What frightens [anti–Semites] is not the content of truth, of which they have no conception, but the form itself of truth, that thing of indefinite approximation. It is as if their existence were in continual suspension. But they wish to exist all at once and right away.[22]

Sartre goes on to describe two products of this alignment, namely the belief "that the concrete possession of a particular object gives as if by magic the meaning of that object," and the sensation of an "independence...[termed] inverted liberty."[23] The prelogical origins of anti–Semitism combine with the force of rationality to emerge in the former case, where security is literally grasped from mystery in an effort reinforced at certain points in capitalist drives. The end result is a belief in one's independence and freedom when in fact perception becomes immobilized and manipulable, turning in on itself to produce suspicion, hatred and violence.

Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of the prelogical bases of such a paranoid tendency concentrates on the early function of ritual and religion in society, seeing in such actions both the ordering and use of fear and, later, a transfer of this influence to the organization of labour. The domination of mystery and nature becomes the key

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[22]Jean–Paul Sartre, Anti–Semite and Jew, translated by George J. Becker (New York 1948), pp.18–19.

[23]Sartre, Anti–Semite and Jew, pp.24, 32.

to such a strategy of control, and the means used to achieve this end—primarily in politics and technology—have had fundamental consequences for human mental awareness. Engaged in domination as an end in itself, humanity has been forced repeatedly into the effort to control or disconnect itself from mystery (posed overwhelmingly as threat), and has developed for itself intensities of *paranoia* when such detachment fails and the range of connections within existence become terrifyingly real:

> The naked pattern of power as such, which dominates all around it as well as its own decomposing ego, seizes all that is offered to it and incorporates it, without reference to its specific nature, into its mythic fabric. The closed circle of eternal sameness becomes a substitute for omnipotence.[24]

Hannah Arendt's arguments in The Origins of Totalitarianism reach similar conclusions in her devastating analysis of the use of logic in the ideology of totalitarian political process. Arendt, like Sartre, Horkheimer and Adorno, and later Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guatarri, focuses on the "mind's submission to logic as a never-ending process"[25] and its subsequent vulnerability to the operations of terror and control extending from the Enlightenment and modern military-industrial expansion. The predicament she portrays engages the arguments put forward by Hobbes in Leviathan, and the recognition is of the intervening centuries' political moulding and use of logic and forms of terror, inducing reciprocal social *paranoia* as technological advancement has propelled humanity in search of total control:

> The compulsion of total terror on one side, which, with its iron band, presses masses of isolated men together *and* supports them in a world which has become a wilderness for them, and the self-coercive force

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[24]Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p.190.

[25]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951; London 1986), p.473.

of logical deduction on the other, which prepares each individual in his lonely isolation against all others, correspond to each other and need each other in order to set the terror–ruled movement into motion and keep it moving. Just as terror, even in its pre–total, merely tyrannical form ruins all relationships between men, so the self–compulsion of ideological thinking ruins all relationships with reality. The preparation has succeeded when people have lost contact with their fellow men as well as the reality around them; for together with these contacts, men lose the capacity of both experience and thought.[26]

The power of Arendt's argument stems from her compelling linkage of the individual condition to political actions and the connection of ideology to the controlled isolation inherent in modern forms of reality. Loneliness and the extent to which human beings become vulnerable, in fact, develop *paranoia* and emerge as the products of the paranoid process in Arendt's assessment of the problem, a cycle which leads her to quote Luther's maxim that a lonely man "always deduces one thing from another and thinks everything to the worst." Luther's remarks refer to the biblical statement that, paraphrased, suggest "it is not good that man should be alone," from which has been extended the political notion of mutual forms of surveillance as the perfect method of social control, indicating Arendt's perceptive apprehension that *paranoia* entwines itself within any form of control at whatever historical stage one cares to view humanity. The point is, of course, that circumstances during and since the Enlightenment have intensified, and often deliberately so, the extent to which the social condition may be prone to and penetrated by *paranoia*, affecting the individual and the masses to varying degrees.

Political theory has used reason in a variety of ways to facilitate and justify programmes of control, frequently combined with potent forms of mysticism, aiming to create enclosed systems where, as Max Horkheimer puts it, "[d]omination becomes

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[26]Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism, pp.473–474.

'internalized' for domination's sake."[27] James Glass has undertaken analyses of precisely this action as it extends from theoretical assumptions of political necessity through to the accumulation in the individual subject of learned fears as existential bases. Citing Plato, Machiavelli and Hobbes as major examples, Glass isolates the paternalist polarities within political theory whose primary lubrication is fear:

> ...the fear of breaking limits, the fear of transgression, the fear of speech that might contradict the common "names" or "signs" of the entity, thing, or person who "rules." The philosopher, then, transforms the "rational" into the paranoid; and the rationality of philosophic form becomes the instrument that removes from the polity any ambivalence, questioning, uncertainty, contingency, or passion that might undermine the order or domination.[28]

Glass's identifications range from the *paranoia* prevalent in Laws and Leviathan, and their connection of instrumental reason to paternal authority, through to less tenable links between individual paranoid forms and state-ordered functions, as primary contributions to the merging of individual and mass *paranoia*. Laws and Leviathan certainly provide compelling examples of how political consciousness is coerced into acquiring paranoid traits in the structuring of social order; both, as Glass notes, stress the need for constant forms of scrutiny set up to regulate internal space and the boundaries of political control, and both load their texts with a rhetoric of infection to intensify the threat of invasory elements. Internally, force becomes the medium of truth and justice exercised on behalf of a centralized system of control and anchored on a strategy of belief which requires the conformation of its subjects' perceptions:

> The subjects of Leviathan are expected to introject the sovereign's images of authority and to hold these images as their own. It is a

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[27]Horkheimer, The Eclipse of Reason, p.93.

[28]James M. Glass, 'Notes on the Paranoid Factor in Political Philosophy: Fear, Anxiety and Domination' in Political Psychology, 9, (2), 1988, p.210.

> political effort at coercion as deadly and serious as the parent who creates the psychological conditions within the family nexus that literally force the child to internalize as its own, the parent's images of the world, the self, and right and wrong.[29]

Although Glass focuses accurately on the elements within political theory which set up a paranoid environment of control, the absence of economic factors dilutes his analysis and prevents it from indicating how *paranoia* reproduces itself as an operative element in a political context once affirmed theoretically, and from suggesting realistically the connection between individual and mass paranoid states. This emerges more fully in the sort of approach favoured by Deleuze and Guattari in their two volume study of Capitalism and Schizophrenia, where the movements and enclosures of energy within a Western political and cultural context are imaged as flows of desire operating between molar and molecular social formations of desiring machines, be those formations of a sexual, economic or familial nature. Here, the notion of a transition between individual and mass *paranoia* is rendered irrelevant as such polarities are broken down into a sense of interconnected accretions and releases of energy operating to the point where individual subjectivity itself is seen to be composed of series of controls and breaks of flows. Glass moves in this direction when he cites Victor Tausk's important illumination of the schizophrenic mind and the function of mechanical force[30] alongside Hobbesian assertions of the political fusion of energies in the Leviathan "machine," as well as the fear in both Plato and Hobbes that "desire expressed politically, sensuous nature erupting as political energy,

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[29]Glass, 'Notes on the Paranoid Factor in Political Philosophy,' p.214.

[30]Victor Tausk, 'On the Origin of the Influencing Machine in Schizophrenia' in Psychoanalytic Quarterly, No.2, 1933.

provokes disintegration..."[31] But what is needed is an analysis which involves all these elements with the economy of energies in the socio– and psycho–political context, in conjunction with an essential understanding of how the action of forming any political theory, based as it is on anxieties of control, becomes a paranoid effort towards security and enclosure. In pursuit of this, Deleuze and Guattari identify:

> ...a paranoiac fascisizing (*fascisant*) type or pole that invests the formation of central sovereignty; overinvests it by making it the final eternal cause for all the other social forms of history; counter–invests the enclaves and periphery; and disinvests every free "figure" of desire – yes, I am your kind, and I belong to the super race and class.[32]

The alternate action Deleuze and Guattari posit as a "schizorevolutionary type or pole that follows the lines of escape of desire," exactly the fear of the paranoid control apparatus, as a quotation from Laws (which Glass uses in a different context) reveals. Plato warns of anarchy if virtue, censorship and justice, defined and operated in authoritarian terms, are displaced, and states that: "[e]very office will be dismembered from every other; and all will no longer conspire only in one effect; the state will no longer be one but many, will be filled with conflicting factions and, ere long, destroyed.[33] Assembled here, and representing the sustained technique of Laws and Leviathan, is a coalescence of authoritarian paranoid anxiety where fear emerges in the context of centrifugal and multiple organizations of energy. The paranoid solution is to apply an unrestricted centripetal and singular force to the point where the language invests itself with a structural and metaphoric rationality which internalizes the other feared state. In consequence, the argument of Laws is formed as a procession

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[31]Glass, 'Notes on the Paranoid Factor in Political Philosophy,' p.221.

[32]Deleuze and Guattari, Anti–Oedipus, p.277.

[33]Cited in Glass, 'Notes on the Paranoid Factor in Political Philosophy,' p.212.

of short declarative clauses extended towards a repeated conclusion; effectively, the molecular structure of the text organized towards molar staticities. The singular predominates in the notion of one body, one state, and the effort to extend this internalized focus to all meanings results in the appropriation of terminology used to describe that which is feared to the function of controlled singularized actions: the desire therefore is that all will "conspire only in one effect," and will be *known* in their uniformity. Fear of conspiracy at a simple textual level becomes an endlessly recycling investment in molar securities, seeking desperately to draw in the energies and diffusions of the multiple. Roland Barthes describes this action when he writes of "the sociological, philological, political sciences, which keep integrating what they have distinguished (they distinguish it only to integrate it more completely)."[34]

Laws and Leviathan therefore represent the articulations of a paranoid necessity accompanying the development and use of political theory. Leviathan in particular, as a treatise written at Charles II's court-in-exile in Paris in response to the political upheavals in England in the 1640's, demonstrates the efforts required to assert dominance within a self-replicating structure of control. The response to the revolutionary or autonomous action is always a deep suspicion and the proliferation of violent enforcements of staticity through or on behalf of carefully accumulated laws and "natural" determinations, the essential justifications asserted by an authoritarian rationality. Glass's pertinent point that "[p]aranoia destroys the epistemic structure of consensual reality, not to mention a participatory politics and its delicate balancing of interests"[35] isolates a central problem of the paranoid effect within social interactions,

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[34]Roland Barthes, Roland Barthes, translated by Richard Howard (New York 1977), p.68.

[35]Glass, 'Notes on the Paranoid Factor in Political Philosophy,' p.213.

in its rupture of shared communications and designation of reality and knowledge as regulated functions extended from a central source. Ultimately, two essential actions in identifying this process and analysing *paranoia*, notwithstanding the encompassing arguments which have been surveyed already, need to be built on their considerable theoretical achievements. The first of these is a more detailed historicization within specific cultural arenas which may overcome the generalizations of their "Western" or Eurocentric field with a more material sensibility, as well as problematising any sense that there has been a singular and clear trajectory from Enlightenment formulations of reason through to fascism in the twentieth–century. Secondly, the implicit notion (and, in fact, *nostalgia*) within Horkheimer and Adorno's work at least that the Enlightenment produced modes of reason which have simply been mishandled by ensuing political cultures needs to be interrogated within and alongside the critiques offered by a succession of writers and artists seeking an understanding of and alternatives to a rationalizing imperative in their cultures.

The rest of the thesis will attempt this strategy within a study of American literature and culture, and add to it a detailed history of discourses tracing the etymological and scientific path of *paranoia* from ancient medicine to the present. Chapter One will take the history of discourses up to the beginning of the nineteenth–century, at which point Chapter Two will consolidate this information with an assessment of certain elements of *paranoia* explored by Charles Brockden Brown in the early years of the United States of America. Chapter Three will then continue the history of discourses through to the present day, after which Chapter Four will use the writings of Thomas Pynchon alongside other post–1945 materials to identify more contemporary dimensions of *paranoia* in American culture. Chapter Five will conclude

matters with an analysis of two very different writers who have confronted the implications of *paranoia* in their work and gone beyond the parameters suggested in the history of discourses and the perspectives of other American writers. In this sense, both Hubert Selby, Jr, and Robert Duncan provide an example of the necessary challenge to Plato's notion of the ideal state, where poets were to be excluded as dangerous and politically subversive elements, with their demonstrations of multiplicity in representational form, meaning and political manipulation of reality offering a fundamental threat to the stability of a new and perfect form of political control. The stress on literature in this dissertation will therefore culminate by focusing on its subversive power and specifically on the sense foregrounded by Duncan that any confrontation of political control by creative writing requires certain forms of what will be termed *creative paranoia*. Where Shelley called poets unacknowledged legislators of the world, there will be an emphasis throughout on the creative engagement made by a number of writers in an American context with the implicit and explicit idea of *paranoia*, developing out of its systematizations not rigid, exclusive and enforced perception, but multiple and politicized challenges to singularity of vision.

CHAPTER ONE

paranoia
A History of Discourses: Ancient Medicine–1820

1. Ancient Medicine

A history of the term *paranoia* begins in the culture and medicine of ancient Greece where it first appears as a combination of meanings assembled to describe a mental state or condition. These meanings, respectively παρα, Greek for "beside" and/or "distracted," and νοῦς, "mind," can be found combined in the tragedies of Aeschylus (c.525–456 B.C.) and Euripides (c.485–406 B.C.) where they become fused as a general term for madness in response to the need for a vocabulary to describe the inner states of human beings beset by tragic events. At its inception, therefore, the etymological formation of the term sets out the tension of meanings and spaces which come to demarcate cultural and political conceptions of where aberration may be located, and specifically the notion of inner and outer (or "beside") states. Historically, paranoia's range through culture and psychiatry extends itself from this etymological base toward a fascination for the internal and external, the boundary drawn between them, and the possible transmission of energies between the two spaces. Writing in the fifth century B.C., the Greek tragedians confronted for Western cultures the problem of representing artistically the conflicts of passion and intellect, creating energized rituals from the materials of myth which move beyond the enclosure of religious practice. As a consequence, "the plays are replete with terms for mental life, terms that are a part of the portrayal of a wide range of intellectual activities and a

great variety of feeling states."[1]

More will be said in the next section about the proximity of the term at this historical stage to psychic and existential elements regarded today as paranoid; for the moment, it is important to stress that the dramatic uses of *paranoia* operate only as a general term for madness. An example of such a description can be found in Euripides' Orestes, where the chorus determines the attempt to justify murder as "the madness [παράνοια] of evil-minded men" (ll. 823–824).[2] It is this general term that first emerges in a clinical context, taken up by the Hippocratic corpus of terms in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. to designate insanity, sometimes within specific parameters:

> Hippocrates applies 'paranoia' to the delirium of high fever; several other writers put it in the context where it denotes senile deterioration, justifying action by the patient's son, according to Attic law.[3]
>
> A son, if he could prove that his father was incompetent because of a mental disease called by Hippocrates "paranoia," would be granted the request to have a guardian appointed. This law was considered important enough for Plato to retain it in his ideal State.[4]

Notably, the use of the term in medical theory and practice is simultaneous with its political exertion and its appropriation by the power of law, which marks the initial intersections of the term with the uses of authority, giving an ancient context to the possibilities of "the anti-democratic use of expert knowledge" outlined by Magali

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[1]Bennett Simon, Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece: The Classical Roots of Modern Psychiatry (Ithaca 1978), p.92.

[2]Cited in Simon, Mind and Madness in Ancient Greece, p.108.

[3]Aubrey Lewis, 'Paranoia and paranoid: a historical perspective' in Psychological Medicine, 1970, 1, p.2.

[4]Gregory Zilboorg and George W. Henry, A History of Medical Psychology (New York 1941), pp.45–46. Plato refers to this issue in Laws, 929.

Sarfatti Larson.[5] Such possibilities are not irrelevant here, for even if at this historical stage *paranoia* only referred to insanity, its involvement in the institutionalization of terminology signifies an attachment to the production of expert power, and consequently the social production of fears and confidences in that power's operation. It is from this basis that the history of *paranoia* as a scientific concept must extend, including within itself not only the tracing of a nosology but also the accumulation of fears which necessarily accompany the empowerment of a science. As this thesis hopes to demonstrate, the history of *paranoia per se* may be seen as the convergence of a concept with symptoms arising from the development of the functions of power, not least in those nosological and diagnostic spaces administered by the expertise of medicine, psychiatry and psychoanalysis.

Others who used *paranoia* alongside Hippocrates (c.460–357 B.C.), Plato (c.427–348 B.C.), and the Greek tragedians were Aristophanes (c.448–380 B.C.) and Aristotle (c.384–322 B.C.), both of whom adhered to the meaning "insanity." In Wasps, Aristophanes gives a description of a mental syndrome which approximates to modern concepts of *paranoia*, especially in its focus on litigious mania, as well as referring obliquely to the legal controls available in cases of senility:

> You see that great big man, the man asleep
> Upon the roof aloft: Well, that's my master.
> He keeps his father here, shut up within,
> And bids us guard him that he stir not out
> For he, the father, has a strange disease,
> Which none of you will know, or yet conjecture,
> Unless we tell...
>
> He is a LAWCOURT LOVER, no man like him.

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[5]Magali Sarfatti Larson, 'The Production of Expertise and the Constitution of Expert Power' in The Authority of Experts: Studies in History and Theory, ed. Thomas L. Haskell (Bloomington, Ind. 1984), p.31.

Judging is what he dotes on, and he weeps
Unless he sit on the front bench of all.
...Supper scarce done, he clamours for his shoes,
Hurries ere daybreak to the Court
. . . . .
Such is his frenzy, that the more you chide him
The more he judges: so with bolts and bars
We guard him straitly that he stir not out.[6]

Thereafter, the classification of mental illnesses worked out by Hippocrates, which included epilepsy, mania and melancholia with *paranoia*, as well as the influential theory of the humours, remained predominant until the transfer of medical theory to Roman influence around 150 B.C. Effectively Roman physicians and theorists appropriated the Greek systems and added to or subtracted from them, according to their differences of opinion. *Paranoia* was only one of several medical terms which remained unused, probably because perception of mental illnesses became more specialized, generating more terminology and suppressing the need for a variety of general terms for insanity. But just as this specialization determined the disappearance of the term, so it began to isolate the psychopathology around which today's theories of *paranoia* orientate themselves.

The important Roman figures in this respect were Aulus Cornelius Celsus (c.1–100 A.D.), Claudius Galenus (131–201 A.D.), Aretaeus of Cappadocia (c.100–200 A.D.) and Caelius Aurelianus (c.250–320 A.D.). In all four their diagnoses in and around the classical divisions of *alienatio mentis*:[7] phrenitis, melancholia and mania,

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[6]Aristophanes, Wasps, quoted in J. R. Whitwell, Historical Notes on Psychiatry (Philadelphia 1937), p.36.

[7]"The concept of *alienatio mentis* is derived from *alienum* which points to a modification of the mind, in quality or quantity: Bartholomaeus Castelli, *Lexicon Medicum*, entries 'alienum' and 'mens alienatio.'" Guiseppe Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry (New York 1986), p.191n.

reveal the identified pathologies and curative processes which would effectively dominate the perceptions of mental health for centuries to come, as well as containing both the elements of *paranoia* passed on from Hippocratic medicine and those recognizable as paranoid to today's psychiatrist. Celsus determined that:

> the third group of psychoses, called "mania," was characterized either by hallucinatory or by delirious symptoms, and it corresponded to what we now call paranoid schizophrenia, and partly to acute maniacal dysthymia... [He] thought that because "often delirium is born from fear" and that the physician must be sensitive to the patient's anxieties: "It is useful to stop the patients from staying among people who despise them, make them change country or travel for a long time...sometimes it is good to make them drink wine."[8]

Galen's medical experiences led him to isolate forms of insanity he called "paraphrosyne," "extasis" and "explesis," about which Guiseppe Roccatagliata comments:

> He made a distinction between [paraphrosyne and extasis] and those [psychoses] set off in a reactive way, which in modern nosology correspond to cycloid, psychogenic, or schizophrenic paranoid reactive psychoses. They originate from external stressful events: "a psychism disturbed in a sudden way by an external event." Galen called this psychopathological manifestation explesis characterized by strong terror. He called it "a sudden and acute modification of the soul...with fear and dread...disorganizing of the mind...deliriums through false judgements."[9]

Aretaeus, like Celsus and Galen, drew on the Hippocratic theory of the humours and the Stoic concept of the *pneuma* in his efforts to elucidate mental illnesses. The *pneuma* was:

> the cohesive force that structured man in a hierarchy of functions, from the simplest to the most complex. This energy, independent of the

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[8]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, pp.187–188. The quotations are drawn from Celsus, de re medica.

[9]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, p.201. The quotations are drawn from Galen, de locis affectis and Methodi Medendi.

> soma, allowed the articulated organization of functionally nonhomogeneous parts of the human body. The pneuma, the soul, was a directive energy, for it had in itself a preordained aim: "The pneuma is a force of cohesion which keeps the material parts united...man is a compound of parts...the pneuma is unity..."[10]

Disruption of this unifying energy was seen as the cause of mental disturbance, and could be determined by the state and movement of the humours, a typical example of which was an excess of black bile on the brain, the classic symptom of melancholia. By this stage, therefore, medical perceptions had securely placed the human constitution inside a system of energies which could be identified in their dislocation or disruption by symptoms and physiological consistencies. Corporeality existed as a territory whose internality was mapped according to these consistencies, disease or aberration occurring as substances moved or invaded different spaces, causing changes in the spatial energies.

Within these programmes, Aretaeus undertook influential analyses which included a study of fanaticism and its manifestation of megalomania, and the determination that mania existed as a bipolarity, one part energized and hyperactive, the other "languid, sad, [and] taciturn."[11] In less severe forms of mania, Aretaeus identified the tendency of the patient to be "suspicious and...feel that they are being persecuted, for which reason they are irascible," and in the melancholic saw similar trends, although stemming from different alignments of the humour:

> The melancholic isolates himself, he is afraid of being persecuted and

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[10]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, p.198. Roccatagliata adds an endnote: "If the symptom is the 'form of a damaged function...as the soul is supported by a humoural and vital complexion...it shows its dysfunction with delirium, hallucinations, mania, melancholy.'" For a comprehensive treatment of the *pneuma* concept, see Mark D. Altschule, Origins of Concepts in Human Behaviour: social and cultural factors (Washington, D.C. 1977), Chapter 1.

[11]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, p.230.

> imprisoned, he torments himself with superstitious ideas, he hates life...he is terror- stricken, he mistakes his fantasies for the truth...he complains of imaginary diseases, he curses life and wishes for death.[12]

The last of these figures, Caelius Aurelianus, differed from the others in his stress on the mechanistic elements of the organism rather than the fluid and metabolic dimensions of humour-oriented medicine. The mechanistic viewpoint, inherited by Aurelianus from Democritus, Leucippus and Lucretius, concentrates on atomic structure, and as a consequence mental tendencies could be diagnosed from constrictions or laxities of the essential organs' connections to the body and one another. The stress remains on spatial connection and the transmission of energies affecting body and mental states, where the diameter of the brain stem prescribed any one of three states: a tight state, which included anxiety, delirium and hallucination within its pathologies; a lax state, which approximated to melancholia; and a mixture of the two states, with alternating symptoms.[13] Aurelianus specifically included within his notions of "melancholicus" the tendencies of animosity and suspicion.

2. The Renaissance

As a term, *paranoia* does not reappear in cultural discourse or in psychiatric medicine until the seventeenth century, when its re-engagement in terminologies occurred in that century's proliferation of scientific discourse concerning mental disorders. Perhaps the most important social and cultural development in the Renaissance for *paranoia*'s modern status as a concept, and its connection to political

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[12]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, p.231. Both quotations are drawn from Aretaeus, de causis et signis acutorum morborum.

[13]Roccatagliata, A History of Ancient Psychiatry, pp.237-238.

action, occurred in conjunction with the ideas of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), particularly his Prince (1513). Machiavelli was himself the victim of Medici *paranoia*, and was exiled for a time from Florence on suspicion of conspiracy. His subsequent political theory, its identification of the uses of fear in statecraft, and its championing of ends over means laid the groundwork for Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan (1651) over a century later. Together, Hobbes and Machiavelli provided a fundamental shift in political theory and strategy which decreased religious influence and prioritized the military, emplacing *real–politik* and shifting belief and control structures into the secular domain where those structures existed to serve political ends. From this followed the creation of the modern nation–state productive of secularized forms of control and fear, in which *paranoia* may be said to be an ingredient essentially differentiated between economics and religion amongst both leaders and led. Machiavellian themes also played a major role in the development of Renaissance obsessions for revenge plots, paranoid systems of enclosed information and action which structured so much of the literature of the period, and set out essential parameters for writing which subsequently explored the nature of *paranoia* and paranoid representation.[14]

Part of the history of the Renaissance was the rekindling in European culture and science of an interest in the dimensions of psychiatry worked out within Greek and Roman cultures, and sustained efforts by contemporary medical thought to integrate and utilize classical knowledge. Robert Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy

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[14]The key connection here is that between sixteenth and seventeenth century drama and the development of Gothic literature from the eighteenth century onward: in effect, the transmission of different techniques used in the literary representation of infection and/or subversion within the body–politic.

(1621), perhaps the most famous example of this tendency, presents the theory of the humours, particularly as they complement or accentuate melancholy, within a range of Renaissance belief structures, including philosophy, religion and medicine. In the section entitled 'Symptoms, or Signs of Melancholy in the Body,' Burton writes:

> *Suspicion* and *jealousy* are general symptoms: [affected individuals are] commonly distrustful, timorous, apt to mistake, and amplify, testy, pettish, peevish, and ready to snarl upon every small occasion, with their greatest friends, and without a cause, given or not given, it will be to their offense. ...If two talk together, discourse, whisper, jest, or tell a tale in general, he thinks presently they mean him, applies all to himself. Or if they talk with him, he is ready to misconstrue every word they speak, and interpret it to the worst.
> ...*Melancholy advanceth men's conceits more than any humour whatsoever*, improves their meditations more than any strong drink or sack. They are of profound judgement in some things, although in others they judge not well because of their unease...[15]

Burton also cites a category involving "religious revelations."

The position melancholy assumed in Renaissance perceptions of mental processes, and the latency within its definitions of symptoms regarded as paranoid in a present–day context, can be observed in the poetry and drama of the period. Just as creative writing in ancient culture proved an essential arena of analysis, so Ben Jonson's Every Man in His Humour (1598) explores medical definitions, and at one stage a character comments:

> A new disease? I know not, new or old,
> But it may well be call'd poor mortal's plague:
> For, like a pestilence, it doth infect
> The houses of the brain...
> Till not a thought, or motion, in the mind,
> Be free from the black poison of suspect.[16]

The effect of melancholy on the individual is suggested perhaps most powerfully in

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[15]Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy (New York 1938), pp.332–334. Text italics.

[16]Ben Jonson, Every Man in His Humour, II, iii, 55–67.

Hamlet (1601). In Shakespeare's play individuality assumes an intense existential anxiety within the supposedly secure and certain hierarchy of rule, where political power is interrogated from a position of rapidly–dispelled uncertainty about the fluid cause and effect structures underlying the political system of control. The catalyst for this anxiety, and thence for the ensuing political destabilization, is the introduction of the unknown or uncontrollable into these systems whose basis for control is certainty of origin, prefigured most obviously in genealogical terms. Whilst the appearance of the ghost of Hamlet's father tenders an uncertainty, and a genealogical reversal, which may be mediated in the form of Manichean polarities and a reactionary array of superstition, the instability this provokes through Hamlet and his subversion of the ruling rationality cannot so easily be contained. If the religious sanction of belief in Manichean polarities produces a form of internally regulated *paranoia*, suitably ordered by the concerns of political control, then Hamlet represents an inflammation and rupture of this regulation correlative to the tragic process, where the conflicts of *paranoia* in political systems escalate into cycles of destruction affecting all parts of the social hierarchy.

In a way that Shakespeare returned to repeatedly in other plays, Hamlet is about a crisis of belief concerning the vulnerability of individuals and political systems desiring certainty and continuity, and how belief may become paranoid in the circumstances of political control, religion and the friction of different forms of consciousness. Combined within Hamlet are the forceful, contradictory and marginalized qualities about which the Renaissance hegemony, to use Gramsci's concept, was so suspicious, particularly given Hamlet's position as heir, the possibility that he may be possessed by or involved with some form of diabolic energy, and his

artistic temperament. In the case of diabolism, a contemporary diagnostic interaction existed between the identification of the melancholic state and that involving possession by the devil, part of the consistent political recognition of creativity's disruptive potential. Indeed, it may be argued that the play's political context is precisely about the articulation and enforcement of these suspicions within the sphere of Elizabethan and Jacobean succession anxieties,[17] something which receives added intensity in the traditional anxieties concerning creative energy. In the Machiavellian contexts, Shakespeare plays upon these audience anxieties as mental instability becomes secular interaction with divinely designated orders; as Claudius states, "madness in great ones must not unwatched go."

The vocabulary Shakespeare's characters use in debating madness compares closely with eighteenth century psychiatric language; Hamlet talks of "antic disposition" and "distraction," whilst Claudius is more direct in his recognition of the threat concealed within a set of symptoms:

> There's something in his soul
> O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
> And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
> Will be some danger...[18]

Earlier in the play Polonius's verbosity lampoons the rational diagnosis, but within his nonsense lies an accurate satire of contemporary technique:

> Mad let us grant him then. And now remains
> That we find out the cause of this effect –

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[17]In his book, Treason in Tudor England: Politics and Paranoia (London 1986), Lacey Baldwin Smith provides compelling analyses of a contemporary *paranoia* pervading sixteenth century English social and political life, from Tudor education and advice literature through to the conspiracies and stratagems of the court. Hamlet, the rest of the Shakespearian dramatic canon, and other contemporary drama, suggest a continuing obsession as the century drew to a close.

[18]William Shakespeare, Hamlet, III, i, 165–168.

> Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
> For this effect defective comes by cause.
> Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.[19]

The proximity of 'aberration' to political control creates a sense of menace and destabilization, invoking the discourses of rationality and their pursuit of origins through cause and effect, as an hilarious but subtle illumination of the rational desire to define and thus control: in effect (to use the terminology), the exertion of a political *paranoia* in the modern "trivial" senses of suspicion. Of course, each of the character's suspicions about the others are seen to be well founded, and thus the play dramatizes Freud's observation that truth inhabits every paranoid perception to some degree,[20] and goes on to reveal the destruction resulting from the friction of separate projections as they intersect. Where the focus is more explicitly the conjunctions of madness and power, the images are clear; Polonius advises Claudius to "confine (Hamlet) where your wisdom best shall think" (III, i, 187–188), and Claudius refers to Hamlet's influence over "the distracted multitude" (IV, iii, 4), transferring terminology in his fear of insurrection.

Altogether, the play extends a profoundly unsettling view of madness and isolates within its language the vocabulary of confinement and rational constriction which would develop through to the Enlightenment.[21] What must also be stressed in these

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[19]Hamlet, II, ii, 100–104.

[20]"But the partial justification which we concede to paranoia in respect of this view taken by it of chance actions will help us towards a psychological understanding of the sense of conviction that the paranoic attaches to all...interpretations. *There is in fact some truth in them*..." Sigmund Freud, The Psychopathology of Everyday Life (1901) in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London 1960), Volume VI, pp.255–256.

[21]Another classic example drawing on Burton, and with similar stresses to Shakespeare on confinement, mental instabilities, and power, occurs in Milton's Samson Agonistes (1671), where Samson's father, Manoa, instructs him to ignore his imprisoned musings:

contexts is the perception and status of creative energies in their involvement in the melancholic condition. Hamlet's melancholy is not solely the product of his mourning but emerges also from his engagement with knowledge and art, and in Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy and other writings of the period the condition is selectively identified as one afflicting and necessary to the creative mentality. The engraving Melencolia by Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) illustrates this with its melancholic figure surrounded by symbols of fertility.

Two primary drives of The Anatomy of Melancholy proved it to be an important transitional formulation of knowledge in Western psychiatry, marking the end of one phase of the science and the beginning of the next. In the former action, the book's accumulative energy moves it toward the inclusion of an enormously wide range of symptoms under the definition of an existential state, and in this sense it precedes the nosological divisions of the next scientific age. The book's inclusivity, alternatively, creates the transition in the very assembling of such a vast profusion of individual qualities, revealing to the development of rational thought a territory to be ordered and specified.

In looking at this transition Michel Foucault has suggested the creation of a peculiar tension which arose between terminology and symptomatology, melancholy being particularly representative of the phenomenon:

> The notion of melancholia was fixed, in the sixteenth century, between a certain definition by symptoms and an explanatory principle concealed in the very term that designated it...this clear and coherent syndrome was designated by a word that implied an entire causal

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Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,
That mingle with thy fancy. (l.599–601)

ed. John Carey & Alistair Fowler, The Poems of John Milton (London 1968), p.366.

> system, that of melancholia... The concept is fixed not by a new rigour in observation, nor by a discovery in the realm of causes, but by a qualitative transmission proceeding from a cause implied in the designation to a significant perception in the effects.[22]

In other words, Renaissance appropriations of medical knowledge from the periods preceding it and the transformations in their new uses ensured a different form of diagnostic process which relied less on the truth of symptomatology than on the truth of the political causalities doctors began to use as justifications. The result was a flowering of nosologies, which found its initial inclusive drive in the publication in Basle of Felix Plater the Elder's Praxis Medicum (1621).[23] Plater (1538–1614) attempted a full nosology of mental disorders, within which appeared a group entitled 'Morbus mentis':

1. *Mentis imbecillatis*:
   Hebetudo, tarditas, oblivio, imprudentia.
2. *Mentis consternatio*:
   Somnus immodicus, carus, lethargus, apoplexia,
   epilepsia, convulsio, catalepsis, ecstasis.
3. *Mentis alienatio*:
   Stultitas, temulentia, amor, melancholia,
   hypochondriacus morbus, mania, hydrophobia,
   phrenitis, saltus viti.
4. *Mentis defatigatio*:
   Vigiles, insomnia.[24]

The third group, a minor part of a massive nosological undertaking, translates literally as 'Folly/silliness, Intoxication, Love, Melancholy, Hypochondria, Mania,

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[22]Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization, translated by Richard Howard (London 1967), pp.117–119.

[23]Other nosologies were produced at this time by Schenck and Zacchias, who included "the pathological entities of fanaticism and religious exaltation or prophesying." Swanson, Bohnert and Smith, The Paranoid, p.24.

[24]Quoted in Smith E. Jelliffe, 'A Summary of the Origins, Transformations, and Present–Day Trends of the Paranoia Concept' in Medical Record: A Weekly Journal of Medicine and Surgery, (New York, April 5, 1913), Vol.83, No.14, p.600.

Hydrophobia, Delirium, Palpitations," and the terminological divisions signify the reorganization of definition by emerging logical techniques in favour of the mapping of a territory, where definition excludes as much as it attempts to include. Twentieth century arguments within the mental sciences about the precise parameters of *paranoia*, to be encountered later, stem directly from this action, indicating the extent to which the diagnostic urge of those sciences remains anchored in the evolution of the Enlightenment.

3. The Enlightenment

As a scientific term, *paranoia* reappeared in psychiatric nosologies and medical dictionaries towards the end of the seventeenth century, and reassumed its reference to general insanity in keeping with its direct retrieval from Greek and Hippocratic medicine. What exactly led to this reappearance remains unknown, but it is probable that the proliferation of nosologies stimulated a search for appropriate terminology to satisfy Enlightenment desires to organize and define. Greek and Hippocratic medicine offered a convenient source. Bartolomeo Castelli and Jacob Bruno's classic Lexicon medicum (1682) exists as an exemplary European instance of this retrieval of classical terminology in the period, drawing directly from Hippocrates and other Greek and Roman sources, as in the entry: "PARANOEA, Παράνοια, etiam significat, Dementiam, Delirium. Hippocr. 3 progn.t.20."[25] François–Boissier de Sauvages (1706–1767) can be credited perhaps with being the first to involve the term in a post–classical nosology, where his Pathologia Methodica: seu De cognoscendis morbis (1739) features a 'Classis Sexta. Morbi Paraphronici,' within which occurs the

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[25]Bartolomeo Castelli and Jacob Bruno, Lexicon medicum (Antwerp 1682), p.886.

following:

> 116. SECTIO 1. MORBI DELIRI, melancholici, seu in judicio, ratione a cogitatione depravitas, excepta Agrypnia. 1° AMENTIA. Paranoia Hipp. est universale, mite, chronicum, sine febre, delirium.[26]

De Sauvages's use of the term signalled its gravitation toward the designation 'delirium,' as nosologies began to align themselves along specific discursive divisions.

Between 1743 and 1745 Robert James published the three volumes of his A Medicinal Dictionary, where a transfer of the term into English scientific discourse occurs. In the first volume's 'An Introductory Preface, tracing the Progress of Physic, and Explaining the THEORIES which have principally prevail'd in all Ages of the World,' there occurs a "Class of Disorders drawn by Monsieur Le Clerc from Hippocrates." This nosology includes the following entries:

> Παραφοσυνη,
> Παραφορη,
> Παραχοπη, } Delirium.
> Παραχροσις,
> Παραληρθ,
>
> and:
>
> Παρανοια, Madness, Loss of the Senses.[27]

In the third volume the term appears, "PARANOEA, Παρανοια, from Παρανοεω, to be delirious. A Delirium, or Alienation of Mind."[28] Evidence, however, that such a definition remained general and shared its discursive locale may be obtained by looking a little further on to, "PARAPHROSYNE, Παραφροσυνη, from Παραρουεω, to be delirious. A Delirium, or Alienation of Mind." James's text was

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[26]François-Boissier de Sauvages, Pathologia Methodica: seu De cognoscendi morbis (Monspelii 1739), pp.132-133. Essentially, "Paranoia...is general and chronic delirium without fever."

[27]Robert James, A Medicinal Dictionary (London 1743-1745), Volume I, p.xxvi.

[28]James, A Medicinal Dictionary, Volume III.

sufficiently prestigious and ubiquitous to expect its transfer at an early opportunity to other parts of the English-speaking world.

From this point onwards, 'paranoea' can be found in successive medical dictionaries and lexicons. In 1749, J. Barrow published his A New Medicinal Dictionary in which can be found the entry, "Paranoea, (from Παρανοεω, to be delirious) a delirium."[29] François-Boissier de Sauvages expanded on his 1739 remarks in his Nosologia Methodica (1763), where Aubrey Lewis states he describes "paranoia as the Greek equivalent of amentia: 'Amentia, Graecis paranoia; Latinis dementia, fatuitas, vecordia; Gallis imbecillité, bétise, naiserie, démence.'" The characteristics of *paranoia* are determined to be a "delirium particulare mite sine furore et audacia cum morbo diuturno. Est ineptitudo ad recte ratiocinandum et judicandum" (a specific delirium without frenzy or audacity occurring as a daily disease. It renders inept the correct functioning of the reasoning and judicial faculties).[30] Essentially, De Sauvages uses *paranoia* to describe a form of delirious thinking not linked to fever, a definition endorsed in 1772 by both Plocquet and R. A. Vogel. Plocquet's term is seen to be interchangeable with "Paracope (delirium)," with a selection of sub-titles: "(a) Pathetica, (b) phronestica, (c) entomica, (d) encephalica, (e) hyperesthetica, (f) sympathica."[31] Vogel (1724-1774) is somewhat terser in his Academicæ Prælictiones, citing *paranoia* as "equivalent to *vesania*, or *morbus mentis*, which should include mania and melancholia, *fatuitas, stupiditas,*

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[29]J. Barrow, Dictionarium Medicum Universale, or A New Medicinal Dictionary (London 1749), n.p.

[30]Lewis, 'Paranoia and paranoid: a historical perspective,' p.2.

[31]Cited in Jelliffe, 'A Summary of the Origins, Transformations, and Present-Day Trends of the Paranoia Concept,' p.600.

amentia, oblivio."[32]

While this profusion of nosologies emerged an important development occurred in the perception of insanities with the publication in 1758 of William Battie's Treatise on Madness, where a crucial passage differentiates from the contemporary view of mental aberration:

> Deluded imagination, which is not only an undisputable but an essential character of Madness...precisely discriminates this from all other animal disorders: or that man and man alone is properly mad, who is fully and unalterably persuaded of any thing, which either does not exist or does not actually appear to him, and who behaves according to such erroneous persuasion... Madness, or false perception, being then a præternatural state of disorder of Sensation.[33]

As Klaus Doerner has pointed out, this diverges from the attitudes Locke presents in his An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690–1706), in that madness now becomes not just a disorder of the mind, or a false association of ideas, but also a defect of sensation.[34] The mad person now no longer exists in purely rational terms, to be located by a "coercive sequestration of unreason," but also appears as a representation of a new autonomous reality. Battie's theories developed from the physiological basis of the efficacy of the "nerve substance," the distortion or interruption of which affects sensation, and as sensation emerges from a materiality, so its aberration locates a new dimension in psychic space. The physiological bases can be traced back through Burton to the Greek and Roman spatial organizations and disruptions of corporeal energy and substance mentioned before; what has changed is

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[32]Lewis, 'Paranoia and paranoid: a historical perspective,' p.2. *Vesania* was a Latin term for general insanity.

[33]William Battie, Treatise on Madness (London 1758), p.6–7.

[34]Klaus Doerner, Madmen and the Bourgeoisie (Oxford 1981), p.78.

the philosophical background where Enlightenment rationality orders discourse and becomes the medium of scientific authority, thus ordering the disposition of mind and body. From this point on, madness exists as a material interiority and a spatial exteriority within the theoretical dimensions of an Enlightenment absolutist definition.

In Britain, William Cullen endorsed the acceptance of Vogel's terminology by eighteenth century British psychiatry, and his First Lines of the Practice of Physic (1783) states: "vesaniarum ordinem hic instituere velim quae cum classe Vogelii nona Paranoiae inscripta eadem omino sint" (Here I would like to set the category of madnesses, which are altogether the same as Vogel's ninth class, entitled Paranoiae).[35] The main features of the aberration are cited as impaired judgement and afebrile course, with the exclusion of hallucinations and "morositas" (peevishness, erroneous appetites).

Here it is necessary to refer to an essential development at this time in the cultural view of psychiatry and the controls exerted by the science and any individual who may adopt the mantle of authority extended by its rationale. This occurred most tangibly with the emergence of Mesmerism in France and thence throughout Europe and into America. The "discovery" by Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815) of an invisible and universal fluid which penetrated and surrounded all bodies, and which could be manipulated by trained individuals, polarized the hopes and fears generated about psychiatric practice at a time when Enlightenment certainties concerning the known universe were giving way to more radical perspectives as to the nature of the universe, the knowledge of its operations and the place within it occupied by human beings. The essence of the problem was the control of a human being or beings by

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[35]Lewis, 'Paranoia and paranoid: a historical perspective,' p.2.

another using unknown or unseen forces, as picked up some decades later so effectively by Edgar Allan Poe. Demonstrations of such power by Mesmer and his followers using forms of hypnosis struck at the heart of the political organizations of post–Enlightenment life, and led Mesmer's theories and practice to be alternately fêted and rejected by the different political power bases in the Europe of his time, according, respectively, to their radicalism or conservatism. Robert Darnton has isolated this movement and its links to the French political upheavals of the late eighteenth century where discoveries made in science extended and intensified the scope of individual human powers and submissions, fostering perceptions which were consequently harnessed to varying degrees by radicals in their attacks on the Establishment, and later by the Establishment itself in a predictable appropriation of energies.[36] The political gravity of the situation is given in Mark D. Altschule's comment that:

> The mesmerists were convinced that the hypothetical mesmeric fluid that pervaded the universe could be directed to the minds of the people and their leaders, inducing them to formulate a political system that would provide the universal justice, permanent peace, and unending prosperity necessary for the complete happiness for all of humanity.[37]

The effects of Mesmerism within psychiatric practice were crucial, essentially creating the environment in social and scientific perceptions where the space and power identified today with the analyst could begin to be assembled in forms distinct from those surrounding the doctor. In this action the techniques of Mesmerism built upon the foundations and arrangements of power already bequeathed from medicine

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[36]See Robert Darnton, Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France (Cambridge, Mass. 1968).

[37]Altschule, Origins of Concepts in Human Behavior, p.87.

the authoritarian proportions of the analyst, which were to be successively endorsed by Charcot, Freud and others. Indeed, Freud recognized this action and not coincidentally identified the potential for *paranoia* in manifestations of the analyst/analysand relationship where power could interfere with the control of therapy:

> We can easily recognize [in transference] the same dynamic factor which the hypnotists have named 'suggestibility,' which is the agent of hypnotic *rapport* and whose incalculable behaviour led to difficulties with the cathartic method as well. When there is no inclination to a transference of emotion such as this, or when it has become entirely negative, as happens in dementia praecox or paranoia, then there is also no possibility of influencing the patient by psychological means.[38]

The nineteenth century analysts utilized the hypnotic techniques pioneered by Mesmer and also retained the qualities of control and permission emanating from an unseen power source personified in and channelled through the figure of the analyst. The distinguished English doctor, John Elliotson, who was the first Professor of Medicine in the University of London, articulated the tensions of the problem when, in defending Mesmer against the established medical profession, he said: "[Mesmer] employed means without knowing more than the fact of their power; so do you."[39] It is within these contexts that the emerging clinical status of *paranoia* should be viewed, for the movement of the term to locate a condition which involved the specific intersections of anxiety and power followed on from the formative influences of Mesmerism.[40]

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[38]Sigmund Freud, An Autobiographical Study (1925) in S.E.C.P.W. (London 1959), Volume XX, p.42.

[39]Darnton, Mesmerism and the End of the Enlightenment in France, p.173.

[40]Interest in Mesmerism continued in the United States for some time after Mesmer's death in 1815 and the decline of his technique's popularity in Europe, as is evidenced by the seriousness in the preparation and reception of Chauncy Hare Townshend's Facts in Mesmerism (Boston 1841).

This also emerges importantly from the shift which occurred between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the ways human beings thought and organized their strategies of belief. In a discussion about the Marquis de Sade, Michel Foucault articulates this shift from the Enlightenment perceptions of order envisaged in the philosophies of Descartes, Newton and Leibniz, in the following manner:

> Sade sought to insert into the combinations of representations the infinite power of desire, and when he did so he was obliged, almost as an afterthought, to take away the ego's privileged position. The ego became just one element within a combination. In the philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the ego was king. Later, in the nineteenth century, with the philosophy of will, the ego remains king, though in a different way. Yet at the moment at which these two currents are joined, the ego is dissociated and dispersed among the various combinations. I believe that one of the most noteworthy characteristics of our era is that the sovereignty of the ego has been put in doubt.[41]

Sade is useful for this dissertation not only in Foucault's somewhat rigid demarcation of change but also because of the crucial Sadean notion that infinite desire can only operate inside an enclosure of defined limits: a situation which, it will be seen, resembles the spaces *paranoia* delimits for its seemingly infinite means of pursuing certainty.[42] The shift in the position of the ego that Foucault describes radically altered the ways in which perception and consciousness were formed and manipulated by emplaced belief systems. One example concerns the theodicy debate which arose in the Enlightenment, and in particular from philosophical discourse like Leibniz's Théodicée (1710), to assert a change in the view of a human's subjectivity to the point

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[41]Michel Foucault, Foucault Live: Interviews 1966–1984, translated by John Johnston (New York 1989), pp.82–3.

[42]"For Sade, there is no eroticism unless the crime is 'reasoned'; *to reason* means to philosophize, to dissertate, to harangue, in short, to subject crime...to a system of articulated language..." Roland Barthes, Sade, Fourier, Loyola, translated by Richard Miller (London 1976), p.27. Text italics.

where an individual could be put on trial as the subject of their own history, with another individual as judge. Effectively, the disappearance of God as an arbiter in social process placed the ego in a position requiring forms of self–justification and legitimation in cultural systems which began to organize control around the idea of an individual's self–construction. Any analysis of *paranoia*, therefore—and specifically, any analysis of the ego or egos in relationships of power—must necessarily concentrate on this period in Western culture as a formative territory for the bases of current orientations of the paranoid concept. The "combinations" Foucault infers are the essential elements here: that is, the social and political forces amongst which the ego finds itself no longer prioritized and thus open to new forms of anxiety; and in particular, the profound changes wrought by the rise of capitalism and the industrial revolution where the tensions surrounding the sovereignty of the ego in a theatre of consumption and technological progression develop an environment in which *paranoia* proliferates in different ways.

It is in this territory that one confronts perhaps the most fundamental cultural change of the past three hundred years, and the issue at the core of the paranoid problem in its modern context. From the creation of the individual in the modern sense—for this is what occurred when the ego began to involve itself in the arrangement of its own subjectivity—extend the influential epistemologies of Western culture (e.g. from Darwin, Marx and Freud), and all progress from a basic sense of the individual consciousness engaged in humanly–produced determining narratives. These epistemologies owe their formation to the changes in perception which ensured the end of the Enlightenment, but more specifically their concentrations of subjectivity were consolidated in the paradigm–breaking explorations of Jean–Jacques Rousseau.

For it was Rousseau who first took the notion of the human being as the subject of their own history and articulated it in the realm of cultural discourse to a point affirming the credibility of self–constitution. This possibility for the self of an autonomous value grew in the spaces opened up in cultural discourse by such writings as the Discours (1750–4), The Confessions (completed 1765, published 1781), and the dialogues, Rousseau Juge de Jean–Jacques (1775–6).

Rousseau's action in these writings is to attack the rigidly held idea of the individual's sensibility being formed by an assumed binary of rationality working against the disorder of the passions, and to oppose it with a secularized confessional process of self affirmation which prioritized the emotional life of the individual. As Paul Cantor has suggested, it is vital to view this development as more than simply the substitution of one concept for another; Rousseau actually moves humanity's perception of itself from a fixed notion to one involving humanity in the indeterminacy of its own interpretations:

> For Rousseau, what man is can only be determined retrospectively, by looking at what he has developed into in a process which involves many historical accidents and which therefore has an element of arbitrariness in it.[43]

Such self–invention actively provided the existential and eighteenth century precursor to what Alfred North Whitehead termed "the greatest invention of the nineteenth century...the invention of the method of invention," which operated from a "technique of beginning at the end of any operation whatever, and of working backwards from that point to the beginning."[44] The assumption of this perspective by technological

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[43]Paul Cantor, Creature and Creator: Myth Making and English Romanticism (Cambridge 1984), p.6.

[44]A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York 1948), p.98.

progression, however, has been less concerned with the arbitrariness mentioned by Cantor than with the political imperatives lent by the conjunction of technology with Cartesian rationality and repetitive needs for certainty. This has produced a space for *paranoia* in the pathology of certain forms of modern technology, such as weaponry, surveillance and communications equipment, located at the transformative point between the logic of acceleration in technology's use and penetrative expansions, and the fears attending the strategies inherent in technological development and deployment.[45]

The effect of Rousseau's work, however, was to develop a paradox for individuals who, faced with the vertiginous spaces of self-orientation within the arbitrariness of an historical process without absolutes, found themselves prone to the security seeking enclosures of the paranoid ego. Furthermore, this position was intensified in the realignment Rousseau's techniques enforced on the problem of evil, where the rationale of evil was no longer sought in fixed religious programmes but rather in an historical present. Essentially, Rousseau takes Bunyan's restatement of human existential process in The Pilgrim's Progress (1678-1684)—where Christian's assertion is "What must I do to be saved?"—and recharges it in a secular, ego-centric context. Outside the security of a religious programme and comfortingly identifiable sources of evil, of course, the tendency of consciousness is to cling to forms of nostalgia and suspicion for guidance, as Rousseau's later writings reveal. Huck Gutman's analysis of this paradox is simple and accurate:

> Although the first reward of constituting oneself as a subject is a feeling of centrality and well-being, an inevitable consequence of that

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[45]See Brian Easlea, Fathering the Unthinkable (London 1983) for a compelling cultural analysis of the fears and drives behind the development of nuclear technology and weaponry.

> constitution, which depends upon division, is isolation...
>
> Divided by the individuating process from the social world, Rousseau recognizes that an "exaggerated sensibility" contributes powerfully to his growing paranoia... Such paranoia is but an extension of that primary move that divides self above that from which it has been separated.[46]

This predicament, Gutman explains, extends from the mode of Rousseau's discourse in The Confessions, and the consequent political orientation of the new form of subjectivity he introduces. Confessional modes traditionally act as a release and reinvolvement of the self in set ideological programmes but Rousseau crucially turns the technique into a process of self-creation with which to face a hostile environment (which Europe then was to the philosopher following the controversies of his life and writings).

This in turn presents another drawback for the individual in that it adds to the problem of alienation the development of the greater visibility of the self for the purposes of social and political control. In creating a new secularized expression of the self to analyze personal securities and liberty, Rousseau freed the self from the constraints imposed by religious control but simultaneously moved it into a newer realm of observation and potential subjectivization, instigating a "new technology of the self which, although not as yet observedly traversed by power, was shortly to become a prime agent in the modern elaboration of power."[47] This placing of the self in a new position of surveillance marks the creation of the modern political subject for social modes of power, particularly in the contexts of contemporary revolutionary events, effectively producing "the result of making man the subject of his own history:

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[46]Huck Gutman 'Rousseau's *Confessions*: A Technology of the Self' in ed. Martin, Gutman & Hutton, Technologies of the Self (London 1988), pp.109-110.

[47]Huck Gutman, "Rousseau's *Confessions*: A Technology of the Self," p.117.

the overtribunalization of the realm of human activity."[48]

Rousseau's assault on rationality, driven by his sense that reason was a principal cause of unhappiness in its inflexibility in the fluid area of human truths, is the next element in a comprehension of paranoid forms. Rousseau's Confessions appeared almost a century after the sequence of publications with which Isaac Newton effectively set the Enlightenment in motion, and thereby entrenched in Western perception, along with his countryman, John Locke, the dominance of mechanistic thought based on rigid notions of the traceable causality of any event or process. In fact, the foundation for the Enlightenment and for modern forms of *paranoia* had been laid by the seventeenth century philosophical investigations of Rene Descartes, and his championing of reason. Rousseau was very much a part of the eighteenth century reaction to Cartesian theory which proposed reason as *the* saving grace for humanity, where Descartes had sought to replace what he saw as centuries of superstition, custom and habit with an orderly mental system for locating and utilizing truth. Developing an *a priori* sense of the self and its potential to organize an inner compulsion towards rational thought, Descartes posited his famous—and famously redundant—*cogito ergo sum* as the basis for a tradition whose essence, Ernest Gellner suggests, "was the supposition that a cognitive *procedure* existed which stood outside the world and any one culture, [and which] was capable of independent judgement of

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[48]Hans Robert Jauss, 'The Literary Process of Modernism from Rousseau to Adorno' in Cultural Critique, 11, Winter 1988–89, p.38. This "overtribunalization of the realm of human activity" is, of course, one of the major territories of Franz Kafka's writing and analysis of *paranoia*. It is essential to note also that Rousseau's work in political theory, especially his Du Contrat Social (1762), takes its place in a distinguished line of efforts to promulgate non–coercive and anti–paranoid social and political systems. Petr Alekseyevich Kropotkin's Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution (1902), and his refutation of the emphasis on struggle in social Darwinism, is another important assault on the supposed necessity of conflict and threat in social and political relations.

cognitive claims about the world."[49] Michel Serres' remark that "[s]omeone once compared the undertaking of Descartes to the action of a man who sets his house on fire in order to hear the noise the rats make in the attic at night,"[50] is a somewhat more poetic rendering of the contradictions of the situation.

From Cartesian affirmations of autonomous human mental process, Gellner moves on to show how reason underwent different forms of emphasis in ensuing Western philosophies, and reveals the extent to which reason maintained explicit links to evolving concepts of the self. In particular, he follows up a discussion of Hume and eighteenth century empirical philosophy by focusing on Immanuel Kant, a philosopher whose desire to determine the true dimensions of mental processes led, amongst other things, to a study of mental disorders and a realignment of Cartesian rationality. Kant followed the empiricists by overriding Cartesian self–autonomy with the idea that the self was subject to both reason and experience, the latter involving sensory input as well as an accumulation of cultural data. In this way, the self becomes a process rather than a fixed structure, a unifying linkage of sensational information and mental habits of connectivity which may be trained according to the dictates of reason. Kant grounded his sense of the crucial shifts occurring in the self's political position within his assessment of the consequences of the Enlightenment:

> *Enlightenment is the leaving behind by man of his self–caused minority. Minority* is the impossibility of using one's own reason without the guidance of another. That minority is *self–caused* when it is due not to the lack of reasoning power but to the lack of decision and courage to make use of it without the guidance of another. *Sapere aude!* Have the courage to make use of your *own* reason! is thus the

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[49]Ernest Gellner, Reason and Culture (Oxford 1992), p.82.

[50]Michel Serres, The Parasite, translated by Lawrence R. Scher (London 1982), p.12.

motto of the Enlightenment.[51]

In the contemporary age of revolution, of course, many were fulfilling this motto beyond the notion of a leap of faith in the self in the series of political upheavals which included the American War of Independence.

Part of Kant's massively influential Critique of Pure Reason (first edition 1781) included a section on 'Paralogisms of Pure Reason'—a *paralogism* being "a piece of false reasoning; a faulty syllogism; a fallacy of which the reasoner is unconscious"[52]—and in it Kant states that "in what we entitle 'soul,' everything is in continual flux and there is nothing abiding except (if we must so express ourselves) the 'I,' which is simple solely because its representation has no content..."[53] Along with Kant's identification of an inevitable effort for transcendent or unconditioned knowledge as part of the use of reason,[54] this located one of the continuing problems extended into Western culture from the Cartesian inheritance and its sense of the self.

The needs for certainty, which radically underpinned the evolution of reason, found in reason an appropriate vehicle with which to reach certainty, with or without divine sanction. However, as flaws of reason manifested themselves over time, in extensive

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[51]Immanuel Kant, Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklärung? (1784), cited in Henri F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry (New York 1970), p.195. Text italics.

[52]Oxford English Dictionary

[53]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, 1787 edition, translated by Norman Kemp Smith (London 1970), p.353; cited in Gellner, Reason and Culture, p.22.

[54]Kant states in the Critique that rationality strives always "to find for the conditioned knowledge obtained through the understanding the unconditioned whereby its unity is brought to completion" (Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, p.306). Roger Scruton adds the gloss to Kant's thinking that "reason (in its guise as inference) inevitably leads us to search for the 'unconditioned,' the ultimate premise whose truth is derived from no other source" (Roger Scruton, Kant [Oxford 1982], p.46–47).

use and philosophical critique, the extent to which reason reinforced a potential for *paranoia* became apparent, particularly in political and cultural terms where the self, or 'I,' as authority basis or site of subordination, was seen to be without representative content. The desire for certainty meant that reason was harnessed to ensure a content and transcendence for the self, principally through annexations of ideology and definitions of the self in opposition to the other. Ironically, of course, both these actions are perpetually prey to subversion by reason turned in on itself, as deconstructionist philosophy has demonstrated, especially where reason may disintegrate singularity and autonomy into multiples and dependencies, and reveal itself to be founded on irrationality. In these circumstances, problems of uncertainty invariably determine the fixing of security on delusory bases, leading to *paranoia*.

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, therefore, *paranoia* began to accumulate within its definitions the symptoms approximating to modern clinical and trivial meanings. Moving inside its connection to general insanity, *paranoia* had become the term identified with forms of delirium in which thought processes remained largely intact, as Kant asserted in his 'The Classification of Mental Disorders.'[55] For Kant, "der Wahnsinn" was:

> ...that disturbance of the mind in which everything that the madman says is indeed consistent with the formal laws of thinking...but in which the subjective impressions of a falsely inventive imagination are taken for actual perceptions. Of this class are those who believe they have enemies everywhere; who regard all expressions, remarks, or other indifferent actions of other persons as intended for them as traps set for them. Often, they are, in their unfortunate madness, so ingenuous in analyzing that which others unwittingly do, in order to explain it to their own satisfaction, that, if their data were only accurate, one would

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[55]Immanuel Kant, Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht abgefasst (Königsberg 1798), Book 1, Part 1. Available in English as The Classification of Mental Disorders, translated by Charles T. Sullivan (Doylestown, Pa. 1964).

have to pay tribute to their intelligence.[56]

As a term in German psychiatry, "der Wahnsinn" referred to forms of insanity featuring delirium with non-disordered thought processes, much as its English equivalent. Kant's phenomenological analysis became a key action in psychiatric explorations, and his description set the tenor for differentiating paranoia from other mental states. An example of the expansion of this psychiatric focus through other European psychiatries can be found in Vincenzo Chiarugi's Della Piazzia in Genere e in Specie,[57] which discussed stages of delirious hatred against others.[58]

The first major development in nineteenth century psychiatry occurred when the great French doctor, Philippe Pinel (1745-1826), published his epochal text, Traites medico-philosophique sur l'alienation mentale, ou la manie, in Paris in 1801.[59] Its nosology divided mental disorders into four categories: melancholias; manias with delirium; manias without delirium; and dementia or mental deterioration. With reference to the first category, Pinel stated: "Melancholics are frequently absorbed by one exclusive idea, to which they perpetually recur in their conversation, and which appears to engage their whole attention."[60] The focus on the fixed idea and delusion

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[56]Quoted in Peter A. Magaro, Cognition in Schizophrenia and Paranoia: The Integration of a Cognitive Process (Hillsdale, New Jersey 1980), p.133.

[57]Vincenzo Chiarugi, Della Pazzia in Genere e in Specie, Trattato Medico-Analitico, con una Centuri di Observazzioni (Florence 1793-4). Translated in 1987 by George Mora as On insanity and its classification (Canton, MA 1987).

[58]David Swanson, Philip Bohnert and Jackson Smith, The Paranoid (New York 1970), p.24.

[59]Philippe Pinel, Traites medico-philosophique sur l'alienation mentale, ou la manie (Paris 1801). Translated into English in 1806 by D. D. Davis as A Treatise on Insanity, in which are contained the principles of a new and more practical nosology of maniacal disorders than has yet been offered to the public (Sheffield 1806).

[60]Pinel, A Treatise on Insanity, p.127.

and its isolation within Pinel's concept of melancholia may be regarded as a formative moment for *paranoia*. Although the term itself was still half a century away from intersecting with the symptoms described by Pinel and those included today within the paranoid concept, the organizational importance of Pinel's project for the years which followed was profound, encompassing as it did widely perceived sets of symptoms in a moral and scientific framework. Furthermore, in the Traites medico-philosophique sur l'alienation mentale, ou la manie Pinel extends his perceptions of certain melancholic states into the psychopathology of political power, providing brief character analyses of the Roman emperor Tiberius and Louis XI. For Pinel, these figures were examples of an inevitable erosion of psychological health where, because of their centralization in systems of total power, they are "prey to dark suspicions, sinistrous prognostications and terrors ever new and imaginary, which increased with their advancing lives, [and] they at length sought retirement from the effects of their tyranny..."[61]

The beginning of the nineteenth century also saw the appearance of the first American psychiatric publications; previously, American doctors had depended on the prominent European texts, or their American reprints. The first American text to feature the term *paranoia* appears to be The Philadelphia Medical Dictionary (1808) by John Redman Coxe (1773-1864), which states: "*Paranoiæ*, diseases attended with deranged mind."[62] In 1812 the renowned American doctor, Benjamin Rush

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[61]Pinel, A Treatise on Insanity, p.138.

[62]John Redman Coxe, The Philadelphia Medical Dictionary (Philadelphia 1808), no page numbers. The entry: "*Paranoie*, the same as *Vesaniæ*," appears in The American Medical Lexicon, on the plan of Quincy's Lexicon Physico-medicum (New York 1802), which essentially reprints Quincy's famous English text.

(1745–1813), Surgeon Extraordinaire to the United States Government, published his Medical Inquiries and Observations Upon the Diseases of the Mind in Philadelphia, and a passage from section three of Chapter Five, entitled 'Of The Different Forms of Mania,' although not using the term, approximates to present–day apprehensions of *paranoia*. It is worth quoting in full:

> There is a form of mania which is seldom the object of medical attention either in hospitals, or in private practice, but which is well known, not only to physicians, but to persons of common observation in every part of the world. Dr Cox has described it very happily and correctly in the following words:
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> "Among the varieties of maniacs met with in medical practice, there is one, which, though by no means rare, has been little noticed by writers on the subject : I refer to those cases, in which the individuals perform most of the common duties of life with propriety, and some of them, indeed, with scrupulous exactness; who exhibit no strongly marked features of either temperament, no traits of superior or defective mental endowment, but yet take violent antipathies, harbour unjust suspicions, indulge strong propensities, affect singularity in dress, gait, and phraseology; are proud, conceited, and ostentatious; easily excited, and with difficulty appeased; dead to sensibility, delicacy, and refinement; obstinately riveted to the most absurd opinions; prone to controversy, and yet incapable of reasoning; always the hero of their own tale, using hyperbolic high–flown language to express the most simple ideas, accompanied by unnatural gesticulation, inordinate action, and frequently by the most alarming expression of countenance. On some occasions they suspect similar intentions on the most trivial grounds, on others are a prey to fear and dread from the most ridiculous and imaginary sources; now embracing every opportunity of exhibiting romantic courage and feats of hardihood, then indulging themselves in all manner of excesses.
>
> Persons of this description, to the casual observer, might appear actuated by a bad heart, but the experienced physician knows it is the head which is defective. They seem as if constantly affected by a greater or less degree of stimulation from intoxicating liquors, while the expression of countenance furnishes an infallible proof of mental disease. If subjected to moral restraint, or a medical regimen, they yield with reluctance to the means proposed, and generally refuse and resist, on the ground that such means are unnecessary where no disease exists; and when, by the system adopted, they are so far recovered as to be enabled to suppress the exhibition by the former peculiarities, and are again fit to be restored to society, the physician, and those friends who put them under the physician's care, are generally ever after objects of

enmity, and frequently of revenge."[63]

Here, the use by Rush of Cox's diagnosis provides an insight into a deeper sociological analysis extending from the assumptions Kant outlined in 1798. A comparison with the definitions given for "Paranoid Disorders" in the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders[64] demonstrates a core of shared perceptions, and reveals differences only in contemporary solidifications of scientific terminology. What is primary to Cox's diagnosis, and important for a history of the discourses of *paranoia*, is its shaping of those meanings associated with *paranoia* which are accepted today both scientifically and trivially, and which have clearly emerged in the transition between Enlightenment philosophies and those that followed. Michel Foucault suggests that:

> Discursive practices are characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories. Thus, each discursive practice implies a play of prescriptions that designate its exclusions and choices.[65]

In this context the descriptions put forward by Rush and Cox reveal the tensions present in the assertion of psychiatry as a rational and scientific assemblage of knowledge. This is also evident in the operations of the existential state they seek to

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[63]Benjamin Rush, Medical Inquiries and Observations Upon the Diseases of the Mind (Philadelphia 1812), pp.167–169. Rush draws from Joseph Mason Cox's Practical Observations on Insanity (Philadelphia 1811, a reprint of the London 2nd edition), pp.14–16.

[64]DSM III (American Psychiatric Association, 3rd edition, 1980), pp.195–198; e.g. "The essential features [of paranoid disorders] are persistent persecutory delusions or delusional jealousy, not due to any other mental disorder...

The persecutory delusions may be simple or elaborate and usually involve a single theme or series of connected themes, such as being conspired against, cheated, spied upon, followed, poisoned or drugged, maliciously maligned, harassed, or obstructed in the pursuit of long–term goals" (p.195).

[65]Michel Foucault, Language, Counter–Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews, translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca 1977), p.199.

locate: it is a "mania," it is "seldom the object of medical attention," but it is "well known." In other words, the state is on the margins of medical discourse but as something culturally prevalent and worryingly diffuse to psychiatry the time has come to exert the force of definition. Definition therefore follows in an accumulation of polarized terms, delimiting the actions of reason and unreason within the separation of discursive energies, concluding with the necessary exertion and benevolence of medical treatment. The underlying thrust of the discursive arrangements here represents the movements of power to identify and delimit that determined as different or unreason. Such difference threatens those, according to the final remarks in the extract, who become "objects of enmity, and frequently of revenge" to the "maniacs;" that is, "the physician, and those friends who put them under the physician's care," those who signify levels of control and coercion, and those determined to be possessed by an objectifying force. The "friends" emerge by discursive supposition as the desirable and normal American, a necessary instrument of the extraordinary powers assumed by the physician.

These discursive energies need to be highlighted within the scope of a history of *paranoia* not just as a tendency of psychiatric discourse as a scientific and rational force, but also to provide a focus on the efforts made to delimit a concept of aberration concerning a range of social behaviours. It is from this set of tensions that the notion of a "continuum"[66] of *paranoia* has emerged, ensuring the recognition by scientific discourse that *paranoia* exists in the range of social behaviours from those termed normal through to those determined psychotic. What invests this notion with

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[66]See, for instance, D. A. Schwartz, 'A Re-View of the "Paranoid" Concept' in Archives of General Psychiatry, Vol.8, 1963, p.349; and Wray Herbert, 'Paranoia: Fearful Delusions' in The New York Times magazine, March 19, 1989, p.62.

its ambiguities is precisely the operation of discursive power in its attempted separation of social behaviours which remain both inseparable and necessary to existential process. The effect is to engender *paranoia* as a definition, and a reaction to power's exertion from all areas of the experience, whether as the subject defining and confronting the possibility of diffusion, or as the "object" of delimitation and the focus of external constraints.

Before the psychiatric term "paranoia" moved closer to those symptoms described by Kant and Cox, the German physician and psychiatrist, Johann Christian Heinroth (1773–1843) used it in the formulation of his own idiosyncratic psychiatric nosology, presented in his Lehrbuch der Störungen des Seelenlebens.[67] Heinroth's use of the term stems both from Greek medicine and the re-emergence of the term in the eighteenth century. His concept of mental disorder was underpinned by a notion of mental health which ascribed spiritual and religious observance of principles as essential to the maintenance of sanity, which Thomas Szaz has located as important evidence of psychiatry's assumption of religious responsibility within the medical sciences. In this sense it is crucial to note that Heinroth's title revolves around the German word *Seele*, which means both mind and soul, an etymology to be used extensively nearly a century later by Sigmund Freud.[68] From the outset it is clear that Heinroth takes the pastoral responsibilities of the analyst very seriously:

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[67]Johann Christian Heinroth, Lehrbuch der Störungen des Seelenlebens (Leipzig 1818). Translated by J. Schmorak as Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, or Disturbances of the Soul and Their Treatment (Baltimore 1975).

[68]See Thomas Szaz, The Myth of Psychotherapy (New York 1978), p.70: "The cause of all mental disease, according to Heinroth, is selfishness and sin, two terms he often used synonymously." On Freud, see Bruno Bettleheim, Freud and Man's Soul (Harmondsworth 1974).

> All passion is truly a state of human disease... Passions form a very complex issue in the human soul. For they are as varied as the object of desire and fear and the forms of existence and possession can be. But all have in common that they rob the soul which panders to them of peace and freedom... Anyone imprisoned by passion is unfree and unhappy.[69]

The Lehrbuch was published in two volumes, the first entitled 'Theory,' and the second, 'Practice,' and it is in the first volume that Heinroth sets out both his nosology and the concepts which structure his perception of mental aberration. The text progresses through a series of numbered tenets which develop an argument based on Kantian philosophy, and medical ideas fostered in the previous century. These undergo an intensification by way of Heinroth's convictions concerning reason and spiritual freedom:

> §156. The fundamental law of the soul and of sound life is *the law of freedom*: for the essence of the soul is *freedom*; whilst the source of its preservation, the element of its life, and thus also the condition and law thereof, is *reason*. Nature has created man to be free only on *condition*; he can be free *in actual fact* through reason, if he obeys it, if he impresses it on his capacity for self-determination, his capacity for freedom, if he makes it the principle which governs this capacity. 'Only the moral man (the man of reason) is free,' rightly says Schiller; and each deviation from reason is a step towards the domain of non-freedom, in which the mental disturbances have their origin.
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> But man has a *propensity* for deviating from freedom, which is known as the propensity to *evil*, and which could also be named a propensity to *indolence*; for the essence of reason is pure activity, and evil, which is the exact opposite of reason, is absolute indolence. Thus, man's reason and evil are conversely related: the more reason, the less evil, and vice versa. The field of conflict of these two principles is the freely floating human life itself, the free man who can himself decide which side he will take, whether he will devote his life to reason or to evil, to pure activity (spirit, light) or to absolute indolence (matter, darkness). Most people live in a twilight which contains both very dark and lighter sites; but whoever has lost his reason altogether, must live in total darkness. And it is the genesis of this darkness which we shall

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[69]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Volume 1, p.16.

now follow in detail.[70]

Following on from the controls evident in the extract from Benjamin Rush, it is clear that discursively Heinroth's text takes no chances when dealing with as profound an issue as that of insanity. And as with Rush, the use of measured oppositions is striking, particularly here in Heinroth's theoretical chiaroscuro. But what intensifies Heinroth's project even further is his deliberate enmeshing of "soul and...sound life" inside a "*condition*" of freedom and health extended from that inclusive term of enclosure, "Nature." For the development on from the simple polarities of light and darkness is that of a quasi-dialectical relationship of freedom, deviation and law, all emanating from the "[n]ature [which] has created man to be free only on condition." Naturally enough, that condition is a locking of freedom into the system of reason, an internalization which stems, appropriately enough, from a law, "[t]he fundamental law of the soul." The key to the problem here is Heinroth's equation that freedom equals reason, and that any deviance from prescribed reason, or "propensity for deviating," means the loss of freedom essentially because such deviance occurs externally, steps outside "condition and law," to a point of "origin" in a "domain of non-freedom." And finally, just as the location of deviation is placed securely outside any constitutional freedom, so the location of power is placed securely inside forms of regulation by the assurance that "the essence of reason is pure activity" as opposed to the "indolence" or inactivity of evil/deviation.

As we shall see when we turn our analysis to early American literature, these perceptions of reason and freedom, and their connections to "activity" and "indolence," are vital elements of the debate about the new American republic at the end of the

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[70]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Vol.1, p.105. Text italics.

eighteenth century and ensuing decades. Some American writers begin to probe ways in which deviation and uncontrollable activity exist within and threaten social existence, or in fact become required adjuncts to the enforcing of control and the use of reason. In line with contemporary psychiatric investigations their explorations necessarily become forms of *paranoia* about the effects and reproduction of *paranoia* within American society and their own narratives' search for meaning, just as similarities between the psychiatry of Benjamin Rush and Heinroth become clearer in their approaches to forms of supposed social deviance. Indeed, as might be expected of a physician practising during and in the aftermath of the American revolutionary period, Rush extended his psychiatric determinations to the effects of revolution and liberty on American individuals and their society:

> The excess of the passion for liberty, inflamed by the successful issue of the war, produced, in many people, opinions and conduct which could not be removed nor restrained by government... The extensive influence which these opinions had upon the understandings, passion and morals of many of the citizens of the United States, constituted a species of insanity, which I shall take the liberty of distinguishing by the name of *Anarchia*.[71]

Heinroth's psychiatry is much more systematized than Rush's, however, and further tenets build up his view of insanity as a state of impaired spiritual development until he concentrates his attention on the 'Historical Perspectives' of psychiatry to indicate the heritage of his ideas. In this backward glance the source for the extensive use of *paranoia* in his nosology is given as "Hippocratic writings," which is affirmed by the term's use variously in Greek and Latin. Heinroth's justification for selecting

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[71]Benjamin Rush, Medical Inquiries and Observations Upon the Diseases of the Mind, p.277. Text italics. For a more extensive analysis of these issues with regard to Benjamin Rush, see George Rosen, Madness in Society: Chapters in the Historical Sociology of Mental Illness (New York 1969), pp.176–177 and Rosen's, 'Political Order and Human Health in Jeffersonian Thought' in Bulletin of the History of Medicine, 26, 1952, pp.32–44.

"παράνοια" is its relatedness to all the other Hippocratic terminology describing insanity:

> §98. Hippocratic writings differentiated between passing and permanent, feverish and non–feverish states of confused speech and of irrational speech and action in general. Temporarily confused speech was named *paraphrenitis*, while permanently confused speech, which is a symptom of the disease, was known as *phrenitis* or paraphrobyne megale with complementary names such as *meta gelotos*, *meta spoydes* etc. The *parakopsai*, *exensai*, *manenai*, *ekmanenia*, are also used to describe mad ravings accompanied by violent gestures; the same phenomena in a milder form are named *leresai*, *paraleresai*, *paraphronesai*, and *paranekhtenai*. The general name for all conditions of this kind is *paranoia* which is the common feature of phrenitis, melancholia and mania.[72]

and further on:

> §104. The condition which is generally referred to as *paranoia* in Hippocratic writings, and which we would denote as *dementia* or *loss of reason*, Celsus calls *insania* and divides it into three forms, the first of which he calls *phrenitis*. Strangely enough, the other two forms received no names, and the fact that Celsus never uses the words mania and melancholia is no less strange.[73]

Heinroth takes the meaning of *paranoia* to be general dementia as in both Hippocratic and eighteenth century usage, and consequently spreads the term lavishly around his nosology as an umbrella title.

For a history of *paranoia*, therefore, the importance of Heinroth rests not in any innovative assemblage of meaning or symptoms under that term, but simply in the high profile he gave it. In terms of developing a vision of delusion whereby delusion comes, in his estimation, to be the result of "passion" and "vice," Heinroth furthered the perception of delusional states as important manifestations of madness, and worthy of analysis in the location of aberration. In affirmations "that the essence of dementia

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[72]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Vol.1, pp.42–43. Text italics.

[73]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Vol.1, p.47. Text italics.

is *thinking imprisoned* in perverted concepts,"[74] Heinroth was:

> probably the first clinical psychiatrist to sense the need of a unitary concept in psychology—like that of the total personality of today. He was probably the first to whom the ideational content of the mentally sick presented not merely a set of aberrations but a psychological process full of meaning.[75]

Physicians and psychiatrists who followed Heinroth did not elaborate or utilize his nosology or medical reasoning, primarily because of the movement of thought and science away from the rationale of the eighteenth century into the shifting currents of Romantic and nineteenth century thought. But they were aware of Heinroth and his conclusions, and subsequently of his terminology. Equally, the fact that Heinroth's methods of diagnosis can be seen as an apotheosis of eighteenth century psychiatric technique, as well as a culmination of his own spiritual conclusions, provided *paranoia* with accretions of meaning consonant with Heinroth's use. Whilst succeeding theoreticians might disclaim the manichean dogma Heinroth attached to the term in the scope of his project, they could not effectively remove it, something which is particularly noticeable as *paranoia* drifted into wider cultural use. The history of madness is essentially a history of marginalization, and can be read as a reaction to threats to the controlling forces within societal structures. This process is clear in Heinroth's theories, never more so than in the concluding section of Volume Two of his Lehrbuch, entitled 'Ethical Part or Prophylaxis':

> 'Introduction : Faith as a Principle of Prophylaxis.'
> §537. The *treatment* of soul disturbances does not end with the *cure* or with the *forensic* and *police business*. There is still *another aspect* of the treatment which must be followed, namely, *measures* aimed at the *extermination* of these plagues which torment humanity, just as any

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[74]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Vol.2, p.345. Text italics.

[75]Zilboorg and Henry, A History of Medical Psychology, p.471.

> other pestlike or destructive evils must be terminated. The only question is whether we have the means, such as *quarantine* against pest or pestlike diseases or *vaccination* against smallpox. In our case there is no question of quarantine, once the enemy has established his quarters; some kind of vaccination would be possible only if we assumed that there is some certain and safe *protecting agent* against all cases of soul disturbances, and if a man who is *still healthy* could be *vaccinated with it*, the evil could no longer manifest itself.[76]

Such dreams of total protection against a totality of evil were not uncommon in the medical discourse of this period. What is striking here, even if it is in some senses coincidental, is the intersection of a use of *paranoia* with the motivations and anxieties which become the modern condition's basic structure, particularly in its "trivial" dimensions as a cultural phenomenon. The ambivalence entertained in the apprehension of the other, the fascination it generates simultaneous with the desire to destroy it, exclude it absolutely, or at least to determine its nature and thus control it, operates to differing degrees in all psychiatric and cultural discourse (not least in the colonial environments which form the beginning of this American exploration of *paranoia*). It is ironic and inevitable, therefore, that in examining the dimensions of a condition he called *paranoia*, Heinroth's manifestations of anxiety rather than his rational prescience brought to his conclusions the elements sought today in conjunction with the term.

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[76]Heinroth, Textbook of Disturbances of Mental Life, Vol.2, p.428. Text italics.

CHAPTER TWO

The Suspicion of Human Agency Charles Brockden Brown and Early American *paranoia*

1. *Consciousness itself is the malady* Early American *paranoia*

> Is it possible that the circumstances of the Revolution conditioned Americans to think of resistance to a dark subversive force as the essential ingredient of their national identity?[1]

David Brion Davis frames this question at the beginning of The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion from the Revolution to the Present, in a commentary to the section he entitles "Conspiracy in the American Revolution (1763-1783)," where he includes an extract from the writings of George Washington. Indulging the style his collection of variously paranoid "images" generates, Davis heads the Washington extract "There Has Been a Regular Systematic Plan," and includes the following passage written by the phlegmatic General in 1774:

> ...but the crisis is arrived when we must assert our rights, or submit to every imposition, that can be heaped upon us, till custom and use shall make us as tame and abject slaves, as the blacks we rule over with such arbitrary sway... I am as fully convinced, as I am of my own existence, that there has been a regular, systematic plan formed to enforce [the contentious acts of the 1760's and 1770's concerning the North American colonies passed by the British Parliament].[2]

Taken together, both question and quotation suggest important issues in any debate about American *paranoia*, ranging from the religious imperatives governing American

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[1]ed. David Brion Davis, The Fear of Conspiracy: Images of Un-American Subversion from the Revolution to the Present (Ithaca 1971), p.23.

[2]ed. Davis, The Fear of Conspiracy, p.34.

culture and its perception of itself, through senses of political control and freedom—most obviously here to do with race—to the needs to create a certain articulation of the self in its peculiar American condition. In the contexts of this last point, James H. Hutson believes it essential to recognize an early creative tension in American politics and society between confidence and "jealousy," jealousy used in its eighteenth century condition where it refers to "vigilance and suspicion...[e]very entry under the word *jealousy* in Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* begins with suspicion."[3]

It is these elements which will provide the basic focus in beginning an analysis of American *paranoia* and literature, though, with respect to Davis, it will be necessary to go further back to some earlier founding fathers and ideologies to assemble a profound sense of what conditions American national identity and its potential pathologies. Two periods will be of interest: they are the colonial period up to and including the American Revolution in the 1770's, and then the immediately following decades; for it is in this span of early American history that a series of events and cultural changes occurred which secured certain paranoid bases peculiar to American culture. A sequence of historical analyses produced out of the twentieth century Cold War years have variously seized on these two periods as inaugural for what Richard Hofstadter calls a "paranoid style," or a specifically anxiety-ridden beginning of Western settlement in North America. Hofstadter concentrates on political themes in his elucidation of an American tendency to focus on threat and an anxiety about power, but a virtual academic industry has emerged from the auspicious

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[3]James H. Hutson, 'The Origins of "The Paranoid Style in American Politics": Public Jealousy from the Age of Walpole to the Age of Jackson' in ed. David D. Hall, John M. Murrin & Thad W. Tate, Saints and Revolutionaries: Essays on Early American History (New York 1984), p.336.

groundwork of scholars like Perry Miller to highlight early American and particularly Puritan tendencies towards anxiety as a dominant factor in individual and community life.[4]

Although like David Brion Davis, Hofstadter does not extend his analysis further back than the final post–Independence decades of the eighteenth century, it is clear that the colonial period was a fertile space in which anxiety, and even in the historians' words, *paranoia*, were rife as cultural phenomena. Hutson again suggests with some insight that the derogatory cast given by the designation "paranoid" removes its application by Hofstadter and others to the American Revolution itself, as if the inherent rightness of the Revolution and surrounding events defers any pathological cast. But against this one must set the sense that out of early American and Puritan culture there arose a heightened sensibility to perceived internal and external threats which carried through into the United States' definition of itself as a nation and American political policies in ensuing centuries, particularly where, from the outset of the American state, there has been a political need for perceptions of conspiracy and threat to ensure the unity and fixed coherence present within a siege mentality.

This chapter's approach will fix on Charles Brockden Brown, the first professional American writer. His writings, composed and set at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and emerging from what Richard Slotkin has

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[4]See Richard Hofstadter, The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays (New York 1965); Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge, Mass. 1967) and The Origin of American Politics (Cambridge, Mass. 1968); Philip Greven, The Protestant Temperament: Patterns of Child–Rearing, Religious Experience, and the Self in Early America (New York 1977); Henry F. May, The Enlightenment in America (New York 1978); Sacvan Bercovitch, The Puritan Origins of the American Self (New Brunswick, N.J. 1975).

identified as a particular literary inheritance of frontier tales, Puritan captivity narratives and exploration stories replete with anxieties,[5] offer a series of exemplary analyses of the individual and modes of belief as they occurred in the early years of the new republic. As a writer engaging creatively with the anxieties and fears of a nation creating itself, and working within the cultural flux between Enlightenment and nineteenth century senses of political and social awareness, Brown's texts may be taken as key fictional and documentary statements concerning the ways in which American anxieties about health (mental and physical), political liberty and religion organized themselves in the formative years of the American nation. Furthermore, Brown's writings also bear within themselves efforts to deal with the problematic legacy of Puritan thought and perception as it extends into this revolutionary period.

A novelist and a journalist, Brown was fascinated by the processes of control which exerted themselves on the individual, be they of internal or external origin, and his writing repeatedly involves an exploration of complex forms of *paranoia* about how individuals could be manipulated by malign control, that control identified variously as supernatural, diabolical, conspiratorial, totalitarian, or within a range of extraordinary individual human energies. The vulnerability of the individual to manipulation, particularly their mental states, even inside the prescribed safety of family and post–revolutionary community, becomes the suitably American territory of Brown's narratives in the 1790's and early 1800's, where much energy is expended in confronting what Max Horkheimer has called "[t]he crisis of reason...manifested in

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[5]See Richard Slotkin, Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier 1600–1860 (Middletown, Conn. 1974).

the crisis of the individual, as whose agency it has developed."[6] Equally, one must consider the convergence of two important elements in the production and effects of narrative fiction in early America as they contribute to this environment: firstly, as Cathy Davidson has detailed, the extent to which the expansion of printing technology and publishing distribution in the late eighteenth century, via the proliferation of newspapers, journals and novels, created an unprecedented and unsettling dissemination of information and ideas to a formerly remote society;[7] and secondly, the ways in which that material impact enabled the consolidation of the shift achieved through the novel towards the understanding of human plot as a determining agency, in which victim and villain assumed greater autonomy within schemes of universal significance, and readers felt authorized to engage writing with their own interpretations.

The cultural and philosophical background from which Brown's fictions extend involved not only the complex shifts from Enlightenment thought into the beginnings of Romanticism and its American developments, but also the radical upheavals in social and political perspectives brought about by those central events in Western consciousness, the American and French Revolutions. The novels effectively situate themselves in an immediate post-revolutionary tension, seeking securities in environments which offer the possible destabilization of political and social order as individual doubt interacts with revolutionary subversions. The efforts to find security of perception as a basis for wider stability begin at the point where American

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[6]Max Horkheimer, The Eclipse of Reason (New York 1974), p.128.

[7]See Cathy Davidson, Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America (New York 1986).

inheritances of Hobbes and Locke, and their translocation in the philosophy of Jonathan Edwards, come up against the doubts engendered by late eighteenth century political thought and action. Edwards essentially coalesced Lockean concepts of sense-perception (from An Essay Concerning Human Understanding [1690-1706]) with domestic religious imperatives, emerging with a system which explained human activity and thought operating from a will "not independent of the affections,"[8] the will motivated by the understanding. This allowed the formation of an optimistic psychology based both on reason and the influence of external objects, in which control of perception and its veracity lay firmly within the bounds of rational disclosure and therefore sanctioned explanation.

By the 1790's, however, such rationality had sustained attacks for its empirical reduction of phenomena and displacement of the irrational tendencies of human behaviour.[9] A text such as the Reverend Samuel West's Essays on Liberty and Necessity (1793) challenged what he saw as an oversimplification of mental process. West added to Locke and Edwards the possibilities of mental self-determination, where he divided mental process into three faculties, perception, propension, and volition. Perception involved the impression of the mind, propension the affecting of the mind, and volition, crucially, determined the mind as "an agent, self-determining its acts."[10] With regard to this notion of mental self-determination, West stated:

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[8]John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (London 1977), p.63.

[9]See Roland Hagenbüchle, 'American Literature and the Nineteenth-Century Crisis in Epistemology: The Example of Charles Brockden Brown' in Early American Literature, Vol.23, No.2, 1988, for a wide ranging assessment of the philosophical tenor of the period, and Brown's investigations into the status of the self, cause and effect processes, and inferential methods of knowledge.

[10]Cited in Herbert Wallace Schneider, A History of American Philosophy (New York 1946), p.232.

> If any one dislike this account of the matter, let him inform me how we came by the ideas of independence, efficiency, etc. If these ideas be not on consequence of experiencing in ourselves, that, in willing and choosing, we act independently of any extrinsic cause, from what quarter do they arise?[11]

Brown's presentation of mental process reveals that his understanding of the philosophical and psychological debate was acute, and abreast of contemporary developments: from a member of the American Philosophical Society, alongside men such as Joseph Priestley, Benjamin Rush and Thomas Jefferson, one would expect nothing less. The pervasion of Locke's influence in eighteenth and nineteenth century American culture has been detailed,[12] and, as John F. Slater has indicated, Brown would certainly have been aware of Jonathan Edwards' theories, whilst he also published essays by Jonathan Edwards, Jr. in his capacity as editor of three different magazines between 1799–1810.[13] Slater makes a case for recognising in the language of expostulation and fear in Edgar Huntly; Or, Memoirs of a Sleep–Walker (1799) parallels to Edwards' vocabulary throughout his sermons and philosophical writings.[14]

Brown's connections to the American Philosophical Society, in fact, provide an index to the nature of the debate his writing undertakes, particularly as it represents a form of interrogation of the mixture of opinions and allegiances which characterised American thought at the end of the eighteenth century. Brown's attraction to radical

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[11]Cited in Schneider, A History of American Philosophy, p.232.

[12]Merle Curti, 'The Great Mr. Locke, America's Philosopher, 1783–1861' in Huntingdon Library Bulletin, XL, (April 1937).

[13]The Monthly Magazine and American Review (New York April 1799–December 1800); The Literary Magazine and American Register (Philadelphia 1803–1807); and The American Register, or General Repository of History, Politics and Science (Philadelphia 1806–1810).

[14]John F. Slater, 'The Sleep–Walker and the Great Awakening: Charles Brockden Brown's Edgar Huntly and Jonathan Edwards' in Papers on Language and Literature: A Journal for Scholars and Critics of Language and Literature, 19 (2), Spring 1983, pp.199–217.

thinkers is well documented and it is certain that he read Rousseau and Paine. William Godwin's Enquiry Concerning Political Justice (1793–1798) and his novel Things As They Are; Or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams (1794), however, are the central works of a radical nature which affected the course of Brown's writing, opening up libertarian vistas—or, at least, enquiries into the aegis of perceptual and political modes—in his plots. These plots' complexity and their structuring of an interrogative process represent the dilemma of American attempts at consolidation in the turbulent post–Declaration of Independence years, where political extremities jostle reliance on conservative and inherited forms. The sense one draws from Brown's writing, and it is added to by biographical detail, suggests an exploratory movement outwards which finds itself forced into contraction or reaction back into whatever bases of stability may be assembled in the circumstances. These bases, significantly, the novels fail to recuperate in any *American* form promising libertarian progress, as each narrator's representation of consciousness terminates in the confirmation of accumulated fears.

Godwin's Caleb Williams illustrates this tendency in its emphasis on individual responsibility in the face of state and social political powers, and the chilling dramatization of their exercise. This converges with Brown's writing in the authors' parallel obsessions with detection and penetration through acute development of human capabilities, the consequences of incomplete knowledge in the face of possible omniscience—something reinforced by Enlightenment stress on systems—and above all, in contrast to the contemporary manifestations of Gothic literature, with their investigation of these processes in realistic social and political milieu. Caleb Williams, in fact, is a masterly depiction of the social production and effects of *paranoia* within the essential vehicle of the revenge plot, and Brown in turn moved outwards into an

American scenario from Godwin's extraordinary synthesis of an individual's mental predicament caught in the intersections of power in England of the 1790's. Godwin's concentration of fears of class fluidity, sexual transgression, the ambiguities of power, xenophobia, and the implication of pervasive state and private surveillance systems working in tandem to exert both the indiscriminate force of law and the whim of another's gratification are recharged by Brown into a global significance adjusted to American notions of domestic and imperial action.

Godwin's narrative, like those in Brown's novels, is articulated in the first person and develops an energy of terror which draws in and finds wanting all the resources placed at the disposal of the victim in a universe where the only certainty is the *use* of power:

> I sometimes supposed that it was all a delusion of the imagination; till the repetition of the sensation brought the reality too painfully home to my apprehension. There are few things that give a greater shock to the mind than a phenomenon in the conduct of our fellow men, of great importance to our concerns, and for which we are unable to assign any plausible reason... [U]nacquainted with the source of the evil, observing its perpetual increase, and finding it so far as I could perceive entirely arbitrary in its nature, I was unable to ascertain its limits, or the degree in which it would finally overwhelm me.[15]

Inexplicability recedes for Caleb Williams when he observes that perpetrators "cannot produce a great and notorious effect without some visible agency, however difficult it may be to trace that agency to its absolute author," and he feels later on "a secret foreboding as if I should never again be master of myself."[16] This confrontation of the division of self generates a self-consciousness of power and its lack, determining

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[15]William Godwin, Things As They Are; Or, The Adventures of Caleb Williams (Oxford 1970), p.296.

[16]Godwin, Caleb Williams, pp.296, 316.

the onset of *paranoia*, and it is the point of greatest intertextuality between Godwin and Brown.

Alternatively, Godwin's largely uncritical use of "sensation," "reason" and "imagination" marks an element of divergence from Brown: throughout his fiction, Brown ceaselessly posits the questioning of consciousness as a sole determinant of truth and experience—where it may be that "[c]onsciousness itself is the malady, the pest; of which he only is cured who ceases to think"[17]—whilst in the act of writing and producing fiction in America, putting forward the creativity of mind within a communitarian emphasis as a possible counter to this pessimistic outlook. In this sense, the revenge plot used by Brown operates with a greater interplay between individual and social anxieties in recognition of the American experiment in democracy. In introducing the unknown into American domesticity, Brown's target is profoundly political and guaranteed to synthesize, as Godwin does, a unity of fears enclosing protagonist and reader alike in the political need for *paranoia*. At the level of sensory perception in the American scene, the issue is *depravity*:

> The will is the tool of the understanding, which must fashion its conclusions on the notices of sense. If the senses be depraved, it is impossible to calculate the evils that may flow from the consequent deductions of the understanding.[18]

That depravity may be a product of criminal or demonic motivations within a programme of providence honed to deal with threats specific to America: the

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[17]Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly; Or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker (1799; Bicentennial Edition, ed. Sydney Krause, S. W. Reid & Alexander Cowie. Kent State, Ohio 1984), p.277. Hereafter referred to as 'EH.'

[18]Charles Brockden Brown, Wieland; Or, The Transformation (1798; Bicentennial Edition, ed. Sydney Krause, S. W. Reid & Alexander Cowie. Kent State, Ohio 1977), p.35. Hereafter referred to as 'W.'

unexplored landscape and space of the continent, its ancient inhabitants, incursions by outsiders to disrupt prototype senses of Manifest Destiny within a Manichean scheme of conflict; or considerably more disturbing, the issue of internal, or in Melville's terms, "natural depravity," an infection brought from the Old World and already contained within the agents of American providence. These forces mesh with one another and also with the barely concealed sense that William Burroughs exposes when he states, "America is not a young land: it is old and dirty and evil before the settlers, before the Indians. The evil is there waiting."[19]

This can be extended to involve the discourses used by Brown to describe mental processes compared to the debate occurring within contemporary philosophical and psychological texts. Throughout Edgar Huntly and Wieland, and in Ormond; Or, The Secret Witness (1799) and Arthur Mervyn; Or, Memoirs of the Year 1793 (1799–1800) to a lesser extent, Brown writes of "faculties" and "sensibilities," "volition" and "sensation," "ratiocination" and "depravity," amongst other terminology, when his protagonists explore their psychological predicaments. In Edgar Huntly Clithero Edny gives an extraordinary account of the transformation of his mental processes as he relates the events following his killing of Wiatte and leading up to his attempted murder of his benefactor and his fiancée. It is worth following through momentarily to demonstrate the extent of Brown's psychological insights, and not least because the passage in question stands in some proximity to the psychological descriptions already offered from Kant and Rush. Edny explains his perception and feelings immediately before his fatal confrontation with Wiatte as being filled with doubt, where "[i]t seemed as if there lurked, under those appearances, a tremendous significance, which

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[19]William Burroughs, The Naked Lunch (1959; London 1982), p.21.

human sagacity could not uncover" (EH, p.68). After killing Wiatte in self–defence the excitable somnambulist prepares to assume a superhuman capability via "means [which] demanded, as I conceived, the most powerful sagacity and the firmest courage" (EH, p.73). So profoundly disturbing had been Edny's actions in self–defence, and their likely repercussions for those around him, that his mental process pursues alarming obsessions within an anchoring cage of reason which supports an overwhelming urge towards self–empowerment. Edny believes that Wiatte's death could not have happened:

> without a series of anterior events paving the way for it. If his death came from us, it must be the theme of design. It must spring from laborious circumvention and deep laid stratagems.
>
> No. He was dead. I had killed him. What had I done? I had meditated nothing. I was impelled by an unconscious necessity. Had the assailant been my father the consequence would have been the same. My understanding had been neutral. Could it be? In a space so short, was it possible that so tremendous a deed had been executed? Was I not deceived by some portentous vision? I had witnessed the convulsions and last agonies of Wiatte. He was no more, and I was his destroyer! (EH, p.74)

The result of such mental and physical revolution, which includes an explicit assault on patriarchal restraints, is a narrowing of frames of reference to an extreme that might, in Edny's affected mind, guarantee the validity of his future agency and conduct. Within the jostling narrative frames of reference which involve Edny's confessional discourse inside Huntly's epistolary and also confessional medium, the account plays with its sense of *paranoia* from illuminatingly uncertain and displaced bases. Consequently, Edny describes his loss of freedom of thought to the point where he believes himself:

> fettered, confounded, smitten with an excess of thought, and laid prostrate with wonder... My fancy began to be infected with the errors of my understanding. The mood into which my mind was plunged was incapable of any propitious intermission... I paused on the brink of the

> precipice, as if to survey the depth of that phrensy that invaded me; was able to ponder on the scene, and deliberate, in a state that partook of calm, on the circumstances of my situation. My mind was harassed by the repetition of one idea. Conjecture deepened to certainty. (EH, p.77–78)

The use of such terminology in the fiction of the time was not uncommon, particularly in emergent fantasy writings;[20] what marks out Brown's overall technique is his fusion of a critique of Lockean sensationalist psychology with further exploration of the problem of what fashions and organizes mental process. Avoiding the exclusive rationalities of Lockean inheritances, Brown was able to explore the spaces opening up within mental process alongside contemporary political upheavals, using the effects of language and imagery to assert this spatiality. When Edgar Huntly meditates on how to gain access to the secret locking system guarding the box containing Clithero Edny's personal belongings, within which Huntly believes there may be evidence to explain Edny's irrational and somnambulistic actions, the inference is clear: "Some spring, therefore, secretly existed which might forever elude the senses, but on which the hand, by being moved over it, in all directions, might accidentally light" (EH, p.117). What Huntly wants—and *needs*—to discover is evidence confirming a system or framework of action, continuing the careful accumulation of data by Brown projecting Edny as Huntly's double (or vice versa). Michel Serres' analysis of systems and their relation to knowledge provides a useful context for this and other obsessional processes in Brown's writing:

> When we do not understand...when the thing is too complex for the means at hand, when we put everything in a temporary black box, we prejudge the existence of a system. When we can finally open the box, we see that it works like a space of transformation. The only systems,

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[20]See Allan Gardner Smith, The Analysis of Motives: Early American Psychology and Fiction (Amsterdam 1980).

> instances, and substances come from our lack of knowledge. The system is nonknowledge. The other side of nonknowledge. One side of nonknowledge is chaos; the other, system. Knowledge forms a bridge between the two banks. Knowledge as such is a space of transformation.[21]

Huntly eventually has to break the lock to get inside the box, leaving his trace, and by this action continues to force himself and others towards dangerous transformations based on the paranoid assumption of total knowledge and a resonant fear of chaos. That rupture or chance might be required to penetrate such interiority also plays a role in these accumulating episodes which form together as a critique, particularly when, as Clara Wieland states: "Ideas exist in our minds that can be accounted for by no established laws" (W, p.87). Inside this action, it is clear that these quotations, and, indeed, the four main novels, effectively constitute Brown's own essay concerning human understanding, in the sense that they are all writings concerned with self–consciousness, the transformations and enclosures possible within psychic space, and the effects on humans of inadequate law systems asserting control.

Brown's concentration in this case is on the instabilities which form, in actuality, the bases of human perception. His use of Erasmus Darwin's Zoonomia (1794–1796), a standard medical work of the time, and in particular the chapter on 'Mania Mutabilis,' featured widely in his writings in the determination of the ambiguities presented to human sense. Wieland refers explicitly to Zoonomia in Dr.Cambridge's medical apprehensions of Wieland's condition, where Cambridge believes the "illusions" held by Wieland are "all reducible to one class" (W, p.179), continuing the desire of medical efforts observed throughout Brown's writing to totalise the cause and effect structures of disease. In the twelfth part of the article

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[21]Michel Serres, The Parasite (London 1982), p.73.

sequence, 'The Man at Home,' Brown is more forthcoming when discussing love's distinction as "disease" as it affects mental process, stating that:

> [t]he will is necessarily guided and directed by opinion. Opinions may be erroneous or they may be conformable to truth. The influence of erroneous opinions on the will, may, in a popular or loose sense, be termed a *morbid* influence...[22]

"Popular" and medical views of "erroneous opinion" are always likely to be hostile and to connect them to the destruction of death; more to the point is Darwin's assertion that somnambulism is a "disease of volition," demonstrating the explicit focus on the action of will behind erroneousness rather than any sense of incapability.

Transformations, what Edgar Huntly terms "Passage into new forms, overleaping the bars of time and space, reversal of the laws of inanimate and intelligent existence..." (EH, p.239), or the use of unknown or unseen energies to change the known and controlled, consequently become important processural actions and potential fields of knowledge. This is figured most obviously in the subtitle of Wieland; Or, The Transformation, and remains prevalent in the uses of ventriloquism in that novel, in the somnambulism of Edgar Huntly, the penetrative disguise ploys of Ormond, and in the havoc wrought by disease in both Ormond and Arthur Mervyn. The paranoid tendencies represented in the texts largely respond to and orientate themselves around these actions on several different levels. Just at the historical point when *paranoia* was emerging within psychiatric discourse as an existential condition, and gathering around itself certain terminologies, Edgar Huntly articulates his mental predicament in proximity to those prescriptions. The eighteenth century had seen the term "paranoea" gradually isolated within a range of prescribed "deliriums" and

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[22]Charles Brockden Brown, 'The Man at Home' in Weekly Magazine, April 21, 1798, n.p.

"melancholies," so that when Huntly mentions "a species of delirium," "erroneous perceptions," and their "capricious combinations," he is clearly placing his mental state within certain referential parameters. The movement from this into the images of fears of enclosure and control (with their famous links to the intensities of Poe and *his* pit) achieves a level of paranoid inclusivity whose scope involves a range of anxieties with both contemporary and universal relevance.

The rest of this chapter will now go on to explore certain colonial inheritances in Brown's writing, adding to the psychiatric materials already gathered suggestions as to how American religion, early American politics, and a burgeoning rhetoric of deviance and disease combined to synthesize and expose a peculiar American *paranoia*, before ending with a substantial analysis of one of Brown's critically neglected yet instructive narratives.

2. *We hold these truths to be self-evident*
Puritanism and *paranoia*

At the core of an apprehension of *paranoia* in American culture is an understanding of the part played by religion in the early years of colonisation, for it was the merging of colonial activities with an authoritarian Protestant religion that produced what Perry Miller has termed "the complex, jostling reality of this anxious [New England] society."[23] The core group of settlers in New England merged their spiritual origins in religious persecution in post-Reformation Europe with a contemporary experience conditioned by the harsh necessities of survival in a hostile environment. That they then extended a broadly Manichean perspective into American

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[23]Perry Miller, The New England Mind: The Seventeenth-Century (New York 1939), p.482.

culture is less than surprising. Important elements in this view of the universe generated by the experience of the New World were the sense that the Puritans believed themselves to be settling in the Devil's territories populated by his Native American cohorts, and the overwhelming need in the face of the unknown to construct oppositional forces against which to define themselves. As Robert Levine puts it, "[a] typological reading of New World history virtually demanded that there be conspirators to combat and overcome."[24] Colonial Puritans also began an exploration of an equally vast but much more ambiguous internal space within which responses to their environment and developing culture were infused with an ambivalence about the condition and empowerment of the self.

The extent to which American consciousness was informed by a specific religious framework of perception from its colonial origins remains today an intrinsic part of the nation's psychological make-up, remarkable particularly in America's senses of itself, its providential "beginning," consequent actions, and frequent dystopian introspections. Many of the first settlers from Europe emigrated to North America to escape religious persecution and the pernicious influences they saw as part of the Renaissance and its further secularization of society. For the American Puritans a fundamental element of their quarrel with cultural and religious change in Europe was the continuing reorientation and prominence of the self in social discourse on from the Renaissance. In an attempt to counter this Puritanism intensified its attack on the self, seeing it both as a territory of infection and sinfulness, and as a distraction from God. In explicit terms, Puritanism ordered its perceptions around the idea that

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[24]Robert S. Levine, Conspiracy and Romance: Studies in Brockden Brown, Cooper, Hawthorne and Melville (Cambridge 1989), p.7.

the enemy was the self, and consolidated the complex process of fears and creative energies which has become the vital part of the American process of cultural identity known as individualism. Confessional discourse therefore became a preferred mode of representation where it could combine self–analysis with revelation of the self before God and the elect:

> Calvin sets out the Reformed position when he requires us to "rid our selves of all selfe–trust," and his words resound through Puritan literature. "Not what Selfe will, but what the Lord will," thundered Thomas Hooker. The self was "the great snare," "the false Christ," a spider's "webbe [spun] out of our bowels," the very "figure or type of Hell."[25]

The connections between Puritanism and sixteenth and seventeenth–century obsessions with reason have also been made clear by Perry Miller, and they remain essential parts of an appreciation of *paranoia* in American culture. The assembling of an ordered perception of the universe determining that universe as a series of codes whose coherence may be deciphered by an elect able to utilize a divinely bequeathed logic sets up a primary tension liable continuously or periodically to paranoid fears. Puritan use of logic extended from the belief that it was a quality given to Adam by God to differentiate between good and evil, and that Adam's fall was subsequently a fall from reason, detaching humanity from logic in its divine and perfect sense. Evil in these terms became a perversion of reason, an inability in human beings to use reason infallibly, rendering them liable to delusion and misapprehension. An American anti–Enlightenment tract like Seth Payson's Proofs of the Real Existence and Dangerous Tendency of Illuminism (1802) is filled with a sense of the inevitable

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[25]Bercovitch, The Puritan Origins of the American Self, p.22. See also, David Leverenz, The Language of Puritan Feeling: An Exploration in Literature, Psychology, and Social History (New Brunswick, N.J. 1980), pp.9–10.

disaster following the use of reason without divine sanction, as part of its fears of revolutionary subversion[26] in ways that extend out of the Puritan perception of reason outlined by Perry Miller:

> Adam had been created in the image of God, possessed of perfect holiness and an intuitive grasp of the principles of right reason, but after the fall he was no longer able to tell what should follow upon what, or to perceive the interconnections of things.[27]

More precisely, Miller indicates a sense in Puritan attitudes that what is left to humanity after the Fall is an incomplete system of reason, "a lapse from dialectic... [T]he loss of an ability to use the syllogism, and innate depravity might most accurately be defined as a congenital incapacity for discursive reasoning."[28] This coincides with aspects of *paranoia* explored by Freud and Jacques Lacan some years later [see below, p.193] where mental process is determined to function only on the "leg of the syllogism that leads outwards,"[29] leading to delusive certainties intent on filling in gaps in coherence according to the measure of anxiety generated in the individual. For the Puritans in America, having escaped rigorous persecution in Europe, and then undergoing the extraordinary hardships of the New World, anxiety was *the* common denominator of experience which was organized and intensified by the dominance in belief of predestinarian doctrine, each individual then made dependent on the absence in themselves of the one thing which would render existence and reason complete: the certainty of salvation.

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[26]Seth Payson, Proofs of the Real Existence and Dangerous Tendency of Illuminsim (Charlestown 1802; published according to an Act of Congress), p.213.

[27]Perry Miller, The New England Mind, p.111.

[28]Perry Miller, The New England Mind, p.111.

[29]Sigmund Freud, 'Draft H' in The Origins of Psycho-Analysis (New York 1954), p.111.

In fact, under such stress, Puritanism moved on from purely syllogistic reasoning to an axiomatic structuring of thought, seeking order in the *action* of assertion where "true doctrine is a series of axioms, and correct propositions are so self–evident that in almost all cases doubt can be resolved by the mere statement of the disjunctive syllogism."[30] The situation is essentially one of completing or overriding whatever epistemological gaps exist in the universe by an authority or power granted through anxiety and facilitated by a systematization excluding all doubt as evil. The production of doubt or continuation of mystery then accumulates around itself the stigma of evil, especially where any incident or phenomena may confound the operations of axiomatic reason, and the existential environment becomes ripe for *paranoia* when one considers the extent to which Puritanism developed a self–interrogative tendency guaranteed to see in all events and one's reaction to them the opposed forces of good and evil.

The effect this had on Puritan communities and individuals has been documented in analyses of the primary confessional form of Puritan writing, but more importantly in the repetition since the seventeenth century of creative attempts to understand this inherited conviction within sectors of the American psyche. Charles Brockden Brown is only one early American writer at the vanguard of these attempts and the intensities generated in the form of his narratives—explicitly confessional in their epistolary and stated purpose—resonate with the kinds of tensions Sacvan Bercovitch describes when he quotes from William Whitaker's A Disputation on Holy Scripture (1849) to illustrate the ongoing Protestant tendency of thought in interpretation, where "When we proceed from the thing to the thing signified, we bring

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[30]Freud, 'Draft H,' p.151.

no new sense, but only bring to light what was before concealed in the sign."[31] The pressures of needing to believe that the correct and concealed interpretation of the code is held, or can be reached, by the self amid a world of conflictual evidence leads to the destructive modes apparent in Puritan confessional discourse:

> The state of mind might be described as a schizophrenic single-mindedness. With few exceptions, the myriad auto-machiae demonstrate that private insecurity is proportionate to public affirmation, just as, conversely, the force of I-ness is transparent in the violent vocabulary of self-abhorrence.
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> The struggle entailed a relentless psychic strain; and in New England, where the theocracy insisted upon it with unusual vigor—where anxiety about election was not only normal but mandatory—hysteria, breakdowns, and suicides were not uncommon.[32]

Bercovitch uses the term "schizophrenic" which, in recent decades, has eclipsed *paranoia* as a diagnostic term due to the determined rarity of what is called "pure" *paranoia*, as the ongoing history of discourses will demonstrate later. Notwithstanding the terminology, the enclosure described here is terrifying, breeding a potential for *paranoia* both in personal doubt and in the presumed necessities of political force, where Puritanism persists as the creation of a vast, intrinsically melancholic reality, as David Leverenz has also indicated in his identifications of Puritan obsessiveness and *paranoia*.[33]

Indeed, the connections of *paranoia* to such perceptual tendencies are pursued by a recent American psychiatric authority on *paranoia*, David Shapiro, who correctly stresses the need to confront the dynamic nature of *paranoia* where those affected

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[31]William Whitaker, A Disputation on Holy Scripture (Cambridge 1849), cited in Bercovitch, The Puritan Origins of the American Self, p.111.

[32]Bercovitch, The Puritan Origins of the American Self, p.23.

[33]Leverenz, The Language of Puritan Feeling, p.111.

must be seen not as being assailed by anxieties, but as actively searching them out; searching, if we link modern analysis to certain momentums in Puritan perception, to provide revelation in environments of concealment. Describing paranoid tendencies within the compass of his sense of "neurotic styles," Shapiro suggests that an individual afflicted is "no longer merely a victim of historical events... his way of thinking and his attitudes—his style, in other words—having also been formed by that history, are now integral parts of that neurotic functioning and move him to think, feel, and act in ways that are indispensable to it."[34] Furthermore, Shapiro goes on to discuss the ways in which *paranoia* distorts both reality and physical and mental states, tracing in case studies the ways in which clinically diagnosed paranoiacs perceive their bodies as instruments and mechanisms, desiring rigid control of a potentially errant machine. In support of this he cites the illuminating phrases used by Roy Schafer in his apprehension of paranoid states, where Schafer assesses paranoid individuals' "inner surveillance," which he likens to an "internal police state."[35]

These descriptions are not given here to diagnose American Puritans as paranoid, but merely to juxtapose modern *American* diagnoses to a potential in the psychodynamics of American Puritan perception, somewhat in the wake of Wilhelm Reich's identification of a northern European predilection for "character armouring" which he extended through political and economic conditions to Western psychopathology.[36] The ways in which a paranoid potential may be realised in an

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[34]David Shapiro, Neurotic Styles (New York 1965), p.21.

[35]Roy Schafer, Psychoanalytic Rorschach Interpretation (New York 1954), cited in Shapiro, Neurotic Styles, p.75.

[36]See Wilhelm Reich, Character Analysis (3rd edition; New York 1949).

American environment which inherits qualities of Puritan perception can be explored in this manner in the fictional psychopathology pursued by American writers like Charles Brockden Brown, particularly where their narratives engage with the key process of projection. Projection plays an important and a complex role in the regulation of mental and physical tensions produced by anxieties and fears, and the vocabulary with which Shapiro describes the process is relevant once again in locating flows of influence from Puritan perception on into 1790's America and beyond:

> [Projection] is subjectively relieving. It accomplishes, after all, not only a transformation of an internal into an external tension, but also, more specifically, a transformation of a tension that is disorganizing and noxious to a tight, rigidly directed psychological system into one that constitutes a fresh object for that directedness...
> [I]n projection, internal tensions are not "expelled," but are transformed into continuing tensions vis–à–vis the external world.[37]

As Shapiro argues in his later approach to the issue, significantly titled Autonomy and Rigid Character (1981), projection is not a device, but the outcome of a tendency produced under certain conditions of increasing tension so that tension is not relieved but forestalled and realigned before it becomes intolerable.[38] It is these physical and mental tensions, and particularly their involvement in "transformation" which will engage us further on in our analysis of Charles Brockden Brown.

More immediately, however, the number of potential suicides and breakdowns among characters in Brown's fiction, and the actual hysteria and self–abhorrence invigorated in the first person narratives links them to this Puritan scenario: what has changed on from the seventeenth century, and earlier, are the drives energizing insecurities. Election is no longer the sole issue, though it may remain a subliminal

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[37]Shapiro, Neurotic Styles, p.93.

[38]David Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character (New York 1981), p.145.

force; a multiple and more diverse set of threats exist at the end of the eighteenth century and their orchestration in a system of evil continues to grapple with the sense of human perceptual inadequacies under the aegis of reason whose use has overtones more of a political than religious nature. This is certainly not to deny the political necessities, however, inherent in the American Puritan programme whose social structure depended on a hermeneutic rigidity, as savage political force in the various New England Antinomian dissidences and witch–hunts demonstrated, and whose notorious inflexibility has so often been credited with ensuring the survival and intitial possibility of the American nation.

In the political contexts of the 1790's the religious inheritances of Puritanism also transform themselves into a double fear—a fear simultaneously that the American utopian project may be missing the crucial elements assumed to be available to a committed nation in their ongoing experiment in libertarianism; and a retroactive fear that such a completion may have occurred and that the American dream had become the American nightmare of total control under the infiltration of a force of evil. Both extensions of anxiety into fear operate out of millennialist origins in which desires for the security of an assured knowledge or ending—even if such knowledge is of self–destruction—come to dominate the detective urge of Brown's narratives. A consequence of this in those narratives is the frequency of a desire for suicide in the face of unacceptable phenomena, and an interchangeable pursuit/pursued action as Brown's protagonists, like Clara Wieland in Wieland, Althorpe in Somnambulism. A Fragment (1804), and Edgar Huntly in Edgar Huntly, seek both within and without themselves to extirpate evil.

The sequence of death in Wieland reveals the destruction and *paranoia*

generated by religious dogma. Such damage is connected explicitly to Old World religious infections as it extends at the novel's opening from the brand of French Albigensian doctrine practised by Wieland, Snr. This transfusion from across the Atlantic sets in motion the horrific consequences of a realized potential for fanaticism juxtaposed in Wieland and the linked text Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist (1803–1805) where the Jesuitical and Illuminati dimensions given to Carwin's perverse and conspiratorial actions become apparent. Wieland, Snr's convictions set out from the scriptural rationale, "Seek and ye shall find" (W, p.8), and construct a personal system of belief "embraced not...because it was the best, but because it had been expressly prescribed to him" (W, p.12). The results of being unable to adhere to the demands of this system are a mental breakdown followed by mysterious combustion in a self–constructed temple adjacent to the family habitation.

Fever, delirium and disease follow this unexplained event, about which Clara Wieland's uncle, predictably a doctor, believes "half the truth had been suppressed" (W, 18), the destruction expending itself on the first generation by killing Wieland, Snr and his wife. Clara's ensuing meditations on the fate of her father are significant for what is to follow in the life of his son, especially when she asks if it may be "a fresh proof that the Divine Ruler interferes in human affairs, meditates an end, selects and commissions his agents, and enforces, by unequivocal sanctions, submission to his will?" The more empirical tendency of thought, however, is as active in the face of mystery, for she adds immediately afterwards: "Or, was it merely the irregular expansion of the fluid that imparts warmth to our heart and blood, caused by the fatigue of the preceding day, or flowing, by established laws, from the condition of

[Wieland, Snr's] thoughts?" (W,19).[39] This apparently contrary beginning illuminates disturbing tensions as the narrative oscillates between philosophy and physiology, sensation and reality, always aware of its predicament in an age of contrary and fragile systems of knowledge. The structured enforcements of religion are juxtaposed with a supplanting empiricism, the latter retaining space in "the condition of his thoughts" for the inconsistency and obsession which Brown ceaselessly posits as a fundamental denominator of human agency.

Indeed, the empirical side of this meditation and the ways in which empiricism is undercut in the narrative lead Clara Wieland and certainly the American reader of the period to "seek" the meaning of "established" and perhaps concealed "laws," an action which stresses Daniel Boorstin's caution against any tendency to over-systematize American thought. Boorstin's perception of American thought in the colonial and post-colonial era focuses on a dynamic experiential quality utilized in the actions of survival, expansion and exploration, where the dependence is very much one on "self evidence,"[40] inviting the infusion of empiricism. The extent to which this occurred is borne out by the critical cast of Charles Brockden Brown's fiction and his analyses of the American psyche under internal and external pressure, particularly in his focus on the vulnerability of that psyche to phenomena unexplainable by evident causalities. Left at the end of the narrative with a choice between an empiricism which folds before the stratagems of Carwin, and a religion palpably destructive in her brother's fanaticism, Clara Wieland has little recourse but to murmur beliefs about

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[39]A footnote is added in the text reinforcing the remarks about Wieland, Snr's demise with documentary evidence said to be found in "the Journals of Florence...the 'Journal de Medicine'...[and t]he researches of Maffei and Fontana" (W, 19n).

[40]Daniel J. Boorstin, The Americans: The Colonial Experience (New York 1958), p.152.

diabolical influence, and to repeat a dependence on the now shattered "established laws" from the vantage of France, the locale from which the Wieland family first acquired its damaging tendencies of thought. The inadequacy of the "established laws" is excused by the extraordinary phenomena confronted and the internal corruption of the victims:

> I leave you to moralize on this tale. That virtue should become a victim of treachery is, no doubt, a mournful consideration; but it will not escape your notice, that the evils of which Carwin and Maxwell were the authors owed their existence to the errors of the sufferers. ...If Wieland had framed juster notions of moral duty, and of the divine attributes; or if I had been gifted with ordinary equanimity or foresight, the double-tongued deceiver would have been baffled and repelled. (W, 244)

This concentration on an internal corruption worked by and/or with external forces of a malign and possibly diabolic nature extends explicitly from Puritan inheritances matured and secularized in the intervening years by the rigours of the early American experience. David Brion Davis makes it clear that the founding fathers reacted to the failure of the New World to provide the hoped-for New Jerusalem as the manifestation of a universal conspiracy,[41] whilst Henry May notes the parallels between this and his concept of the "Revolutionary Enlightenment" as it occurred in the United States:

> As a number of historians have suggested, there is much in common between millennial and sectarian movements and the new revolution of the later eighteenth century. The Revolutionary Enlightenment is linked to prophets and preachers of the past by its hatred of lukewarmness and cynicism, its demand for absolute commitment, its dedication and intolerance, its constant invocation of the instincts of the people against the sophistication of the learned.[42]

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[41]David Brion Davis, Homicide in American Fiction (Ithaca 1957), p.9.

[42]May, The Enlightenment in America, p.154.

Indeed, May describes how the effects of the Enlightenment, in its "Revolutionary" and other guises, provoked forms of mutual *paranoia* between proponents and opponents of the cultural and political changes sweeping through Europe and America in the late eighteenth century. Where the previous quotation identifies the often fanatical anxieties of those seeking to construct reasoned utopias, so there also existed equal fervour in opposition which "came to see all forms of Enlightenment as parts of the same gigantic conspiracy, a plot which began by questioning existing ideas and institutions with the purpose of destroying them eventually."[43] The *paranoia* of our ensuing "democracies" extends from this political inheritance, emerging around and inside the systematizations of power and knowledge, a process in Brown's narratives signified contemporarily by the conjunctions of religious belief and revolutionary zeal (the latter most obviously in the repeated appearances of characters involved in Illuminati or similar schemes) as they threaten and supplant perceptual inadequacies. The predicament for the narrators and contemporary American population alike is one of finding ways to mediate these paranoid tensions, analyzing the realities made available to them, the better to determine true threat. In Wieland, Theodore Wieland represents the mania and manipulability of the believer, whilst Carwin plays on this facility with the depravity Brown suggests any individual is likely to allow to conquer the better angels of their nature once in possession of extraordinary powers:

> These images were unavoidably connected with that of Carwin. In this paroxysm of distress, my attention fastened on him as the grand deceiver; the author of this black conspiracy; the intelligence that governed in this storm.
>
> Some relief is afforded in the midst of suffering, when its author is discovered or imagined, and an object found on which we may pour out our indignation and our vengeance....Mixed up with

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[43]May, The Enlightenment in America, pp.153–4.

> notions of supernatural agency were the vehement suspicions which I entertained, that Carwin was the enemy whose machinations had destroyed us. (W, 190)

Where rational cognition asserts itself, it invariably attempts to confront the mysterious and uncontrollable interference of Carwin's powers in a lengthy discourse of alternatives and probabilities, particularly here in the vital indeterminacy of discovery or imagination. The absence of the crucial evidence—the source of power—motivates the cognitive desire for security to leap over this absence into affirmations of a religious hue, the narratives emotively fixing upon a stark diabolism as the source whilst underneath this Brown provocatively lays bare the paranoid "condition of...thoughts."

The "transformation" of Wieland's title, therefore, is one very much to do with an energized disturbance of physical and mental action, the question of volition asserting itself as primary in a period centrally concerned with the declining force of religion and recognised inadequacies in secular forms of state control. All five major characters in Wieland—Wieland, Snr, Clara and Theodore Wieland, Carwin and Pleyel—undergo transformations producing the disturbing spectacle of an individual acting outside the parameters of "ordinary equanimity" and known capability. Michael Gilmore sees the transformative process in broader sociological terms, perceiving the Wieland family and Pleyel as secularized and bourgeois representatives transformed from a Puritan past—in the senses both of the family's immediate religious roots and the origins of American colonial consciousness—into a fragile Enlightenment which suffers a retrenchment to the dimensions of Puritan conflict structures. Gilmore states that "[t]he transformation of Brown's title refers both to the Fall and the promise of

redemption...,"[44] to which needs to be added that such fluxes receive their energization in the paranoid fatalism which attends the characters in their moments of change and reflection. Brown's narratives and the actions of his characters dramatize explicitly that it is in the confrontation of Puritan doctrine (with its emphasis on human helplessness) and Enlightenment-driven notions of democracy in the New Republic (assuring the success of revolutionary self-empowerment) that much damaging *paranoia* unavoidably emerges. The narratives repeatedly demonstrate that the agency of destruction has its origins in human processes, especially a thrall before the unexplained workings of power, and the suspension of a failed empiricism among victims and perpetrator alike fosters their *paranoia* and their tendency to rely on religion for absolute knowledge. At his trial, where in his own words he is charged with "diabolical malice" (W, 164), Theodore Wieland proclaims his trust in the "Omnipotent" being who directed him to his appalling act, stating, "I know not what is crime; what actions are evil in their ultimate and comprehensive tendency, or what are good. Thy knowledge, as thy power, is unlimited. I have taken thee for my guide, and cannot err" (W, 176-177). This isolates the appeal to the absolute which is so disastrous an act and so often signifies entrapment inside *paranoia*, as American literature and history has regularly testified. Symbolically, Wieland takes as his "guide" words emerging out of a cultural and political matrix whose more extreme discourses stress the millennial fate within which or toward which America moves. Norman Cohn has confirmed this process in his analysis of similar cultural contexts, where he states that: "revolutionary chiliasm thrives best...where history is imagined

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[44]Michael T. Gilmore, 'Calvinism and Gothicism: the example of Brown's Wieland' in Studies in the Novel, 9, (1977), p.117.

as having an intent purpose which is preordained to be realised on this earth in a single final consummation."[45] Indeed, virtually all of Brown's major narratives and characters participate in this implosion of *paranoia* as an inevitability or existential necessity within the 1790's American environment, whatever their religious or political stance.

The truly revealing part of religious process for an analysis of *paranoia*—and here we participate fully in the meaning-seeking tendencies we may call paranoid—operates in religion's most transformative energy: the desire for and action of *revelation*. As James Hillman has pointed out, using Karl Jaspers and C. G. Jung, revelation is central to the human obsession with the possibility of unseen orders and meaning, and functions as *the* foundation of religion and religious order. In this obsession, *paranoia* occurs in proportion to the necessity for delusion, both for the perceptions of religion and a superseding theology, psychiatry:

> Paranoia is given with our theological *Weltbild*. Consequently, psychiatry cannot reach the endemic paranoia, the delusional potential, in individuals without addressing its source in the collective: that doctrinal need for a hidden God to reveal himself and whose revelations cannot be clearly distinguished from delusions.[46]

Hillman's comments open a path into the terrain of power where *paranoia* exists as *the* reality, and delusion exists only as a notion determining the enforcement of power, particularly when he cites Jung's statements that: "Religion means dependence on and submission to the irrational facts of experience,"[47] and: "I make my patients

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[45]Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (London 1957), p.307.

[46]James Hillman, Eranos Lectures 8: On Paranoia (Dallas 1988), p.39.

[47]Hillman, On Paranoia, p.41; quotation from C. G. Jung, 'The Undiscovered Self' in Collected Works (London 1967), Vol.10, p.505.

understand that all things which happen to them against their will are a superior force. ...God is nothing more than that superior force in our life. You can experience God everyday."[48] The problem, however, is that people *do* experience God everyday in their self-conciousness about power, and they may be either criminal or authoritarian specialists enforcing forms of behaviour in society, the psychoanalyst being just one representative.

In these contexts, it is clear that the extent to which the revelation of unseen meanings hardens and disrupts perception and requires submission in Wieland stands as a devastating critique not just of the predominant belief and philosophy of the period, but also, on a universal scale, of the potential uses of power which Jung asserts as a kind of therapeutic thrall. Brown's particular understanding of this problem is figured in his depiction of the hereditary yet differentiated traits of Wieland father and son, the elder possessed of self-revelations which immobilize him inside a system where he becomes fearful and vulnerable to unseen energies which finally kill him; and the younger, who responds so tragically to external stimuli to follow a similar pattern. Operating both internally and externally, then, the forces brought to bear on the Wieland family receive their impetus through revelation, in which spaces of mystery and anxiety are rendered significant as language and meaning emerges from the unknown, exactly as Carwin uses ventriloquism to dupe the Wieland family circle in a playing out of the tensions involved in the deciphering and use of privileged knowledge. Such narrative action focuses on the sort of early American reliance on a mixture of eighteenth century thought and American Puritan priorities to be found

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[48]Hillman, On Paranoia, p.41; quotation from ed. William McGuire & R. F. C. Hull, C. G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters (Princeton 1977), p.241.

in writing like Joel Barlow's The Vision of Columbus (1787), where revelation is very much of the moment. When Columbus asks the Angel why God has not given humans all the information they need, she replies, in Henry May's terse gloss, that:

> Man must learn his limitations, must abjure passions, which lead to the damaging extremes of skepticism and zeal. He must rely on revelation to supplement reason. And finally, he must have confidence in the coming of the millennium, foretold by the prophets and made manifest by the whole tendency of history.[49]

In this sense, Brown's remarks in the opening 'Advertisement' for Wieland, juxtaposing ventriloquism with science, the latter to provide validation through language, are a measure of the text's profound subversiveness:

> The power which the principal person is said to possess can scarcely be denied to be real. It must be acknowledged to be extremely rare; but no fact, equally uncommon, is supported by the same strength of historical evidence.
>
> Some readers may think the conduct of the younger Wieland impossible. In support of its possibility the writer must appeal to physicians, and to men *conversant* with the latent springs and occasional perversions of the human mind. (W, 3; my italics)

Carwin's conversation—whether it be direct dialogue or ventriloquism—is a focus simultaneously of attraction, duplicitous force and revelation, all of which provide an excavation of the desire for revelation amongst a group of Americans susceptible from the roots of their belief to such linguistic and historical conspiracy. As Hillman points out:

> We cannot suppress the fact that the God of our culture's theology is a divinity who must reveal to be divine, reveal in words, words that are literal, that this theological God is himself a literalist which, if pursued to the end, is therefore 'lunatic,' or paranoid; and this, not because this God is admittedly an avengingly jealous God or because of the monomanic self-reference—all things refer to and signify him, or because he is by dogma hypervigilant and without weakness, that is, omniscient and omnipotent, not this; but because he is a theological

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[49]May, The Enlightenment in America, p.192.

> God, a God of scripture, and the holiness of Writ, who identifies himself with his word.[50]

This is the power under which Theodore Wieland exists and which informs the understanding of his family to render them vulnerable to the *paranoia* attending their perception of the revelatory voices. The first instance of ventriloquism, when Wieland is convinced he hears the voice of his wife warning him not to approach the "temple" (the site of his father's worship and combustion), produces the basis of Carwin's exploitations as the tenor of the family's convictions are revealed. Confronted with evidence that his wife could not have spoken to him as he believed—in fact, "assured" by the family members "with one voice"—Wieland responds: "'One thing,' said he, with emphasis, 'is true: either I heard my wife's voice at the bottom of the hill, or I do not hear your voice at present'" (W, 32). The either/or syndrome links tightly with the Manichean fanaticism soon to be energized by the agency of voice, an action prepared for in Clara's statement immediately afterwards that: "[h]is father's death was always regarded by him as flowing from a direct and supernatural decree" (W, 35).

The second occasion when a voice is heard, informing Pleyel and Theodore Wieland that Pleyel's European mistress was dead, produces in Clara the notion that "[h]ere were proofs of a sensible and intelligent existence, which could not be denied. Here was information obtained and imparted by means unquestionably superhuman" (W, 45), and an impression of a "mysterious but not a malignant agency...the idea of superior virtue had always been associated in my mind with that of superior power" (W, 46). When Carwin, the "author" of the voices, appears soon afterwards his voice engenders in Clara "an emotion altogether involuntary and uncontroulable" (W, 52),

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[50]Hillman, On Paranoia, p.40.

beginning an obsession which she retrospectively identifies as being the start of a disastrous causality:

> So flexible, and yet so stubborn, is the human mind. So obedient to impulses the most transient and brief, and yet so unalterably observant of the direction which is given it! How little did I then foresee the termination of that chain, of which this may be regarded as the first link? (W, 53–54)

The beginning of the causality is much further back, if in fact its origin can be traced.

In summary, Puritanism had every right to be paranoid after its persecutions in Europe and its colonial difficulties: what became the intrinsic problem for the American culture within which it operated as a legacy was an internalization of virulent forms of *paranoia* capable of re–emergence during ensuing individual and national disturbances.

3. Deviance, Disease and *paranoia*

Deviance, especially deviance from a prescribed position of health, offers further materials for an analysis of early American *paranoia*. As a period of transition between Puritan notions of natural depravity and post–Enlightenment senses of individual innocence and health within American social and medical perceptions, the years between 1790 and 1820 were characterised by a questioning and intense uncertainty about the security of family and community which paralleled the overt fears for state security in the immediate post–revolutionary period. The epidemics of disease which struck the eastern seaboard at this time focused these energies of fear into a specific rhetoric of infection, as is clear from materials as diverse—and congruent—as state legislation, anti–Illuminati and anti–Jacobin tracts, and the narrative concerns of a writer like Brown.

The plots and action in Brown's major novels explore the American approach to deviance and its threat to the New Republic, often within epidemic environments, and develop much of their narrative charge from a legacy of colonial fears about the effects in the community of the sick, insane, poor, and repeatedly in Brown, the unknown outsider. Colonial attitudes identified poverty as the basis of lack in any citizens' moral and constitutional condition in line with the Protestant work ethic, and determined that the regimes of self-policing already encouraged in Puritan life-styles should be extended into familial responsibility to counter threats to social stability. Extensive codes of control, including the poor and settlement laws, were developed to diminish the inevitable drain on local governments' capital resources if legal and social services were needed to restrain and/or eject deviant or unknown individuals. This reached selective intensities where:

> legislation in the province of Rhode Island, for example, revealed a suspicion of strangers so intense as to seem almost paranoid....it is clear that one colonial response to the problem of deviancy was to try to maintain order through insularity, like a quarantine against a disease. Yet nowhere was this method enough."[51]

David Rothman is only one of a number of recent historians who have explored the social products in early America of the confluence of a puritan and colonial past, a selectively influential Enlightenment, a revolution, and the greater social mobility and fluidity present in the early decades of the nineteenth-century. Such products are at their most visible in determinations of economic necessity, where punitive shape and direction is given to the extension of disparate ingredients of fear and anxiety in the treatment of marginal sections of the populace, such as the poor and indigent. As

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[51]David Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic (Boston 1971), pp.22, 48.

Walter Trattner also suggests, the cultural conditions of the eighteenth and then the nineteenth century have only served to intensify a paranoid perspective which has remained largely endemic in America ever since its colonial origins:

> The Enlightenment, by helping to wear away the notion that misery and want were endemic to society, made it appear as though the poor were personally responsible for their condition. The same was true for the American Revolution; by fostering the belief that poverty need not exist, it encouraged a harsh and suspicious view of the poor. God's will was no longer a satisfactory explanation for defective social conditions...[52]

Yet where poverty and lack of means provides visible evidence of deviance for American legislatures, the need to secure the origins of the condition meant the focus on deviance went much further despite the equivocal status of theory and practice—which, of course, never recognized itself as remotely equivocal. Already emplaced social systems of order became an essential target for blame in early post–revolution America, as those investigating "located roots of deviance not in the criminal, but in the legal system," believing concurrently that "deviancy began with the family."[53] The problem then, as, indeed, more recently within debates about disintegrating and dysfunctional nuclear families as sites or origins for wider social malaise, existed in the contradictions of supporting and enforcing conflicting forms of discipline, and of believing in the existence of a functioning, uniform and normative social entity called 'the family,' despite the social realities of the times. Caught in the residue of Puritan forebodings about evil, but eager to exercise eighteenth century optimisms about the use of reason, a distinctly uneasy sense that

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[52]Walter I. Trattner, From Poor Law to Welfare State: A History of Social Welfare in America (New York 1979), pp.47–48.

[53]Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum, pp.61, 66.

deviance and criminality impinged externally on an initially innocent human sensibility was retained among many Americans involved in the politics of social control.

Significant action in Brown's narratives extends from this social debate and details responses by broken family units to the intrusion of an outsider, relating the psychological, social and economic disaster which occurs when these 'families' take into their midst an unknown and deviant individual.[54] The issue of trust, at the core of democratic concerns, is repeatedly seen to be an expensive and vulnerable option, deployed and then belatedly retracted as intruders gain access to material, mental and physical resources. Characters like Carwin, Ludloe, Edgar Huntly, Clithero, Craig, Ormond, Althorpe, Welbeck, and even, temporarily, Arthur Mervyn, represent this intrusive force, and all significantly emerge from disintegrated family units or have no apparent family at all, and sometimes form quasi-fraternal or quasi-matrimonial relationships with others in radical utopian styles suggesting the possibility of replacing the family with an alternative socially engineered unit. In terms of social identity, they are outside nurturant and self-sufficient structures and prey parasitically on nurturant resources. For the state and those besieged they represent the fearful prospect of beings with uncertain or undetectable origin, who further confound emplaced social structures by their parasitical dimension, consuming without, it appears, any reciprocal exchange.

Brown's treatment of these characters throws into sharp relief the inadequacy of social theory and judgement as it existed in his time, especially where he utilizes

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[54]A significant form of deviance, *incest*, which figures prominently in Brown's writing, is not dealt with here. Useful treatments of this issue include James R. Russo, 'The Chimera's of the Brain: Clara's Narrative in Wieland' in Early American Literature, Vol.16, No.1, 1981, pp.60-88; and Norman S. Grabo, The Coincidental Art of Charles Brockden Brown (Chapel Hill 1981).

the disturbing scope of materials offered in an internal or psychological survey of human potential for deviance alongside contemporary opinion about invasive agencies. His deviant characters oscillate between the either/or scenarios of the dissolute and the disciplined, deliberately blurring such rationalized distinctions as they demonstrate their extraordinary capabilities which are rendered consciously and malevolently, or, more problematically, in the realms of unconscious activity. Brown draws deeply from the ingrained Puritan conviction that the enemy may be *us*, and those characters who face the assault of these deviants agonise over their complicity in epistolary and confessional modes where a variety of efforts to rationalize the irrationality of human behaviour fail and consequently validate the *paranoia* of those both inside and outside social norms. Thus, Edgar Huntly's final letters attempting to warn Sarsefield of Clithero's pursuit of his wife conclude with self–admonishment for inadequate reasoning and an attempt to exorcise the damage of the psychopathic Clithero by projecting empty certainty in an appeal to chance and a diminished divinity:

> May heaven avert the consequences of [Clithero's] design. May you be enabled by some means to prevent their meeting. If you cannot prevent it—but I must not reason on such an event...
> Heaven grant that some means may suggest themselves to you of intercepting his approach. Yet I know not what means can be conceived. Some miraculous chance may befriend you; yet this is scarcely to be hoped. It is a visionary and fantastic base on which to rest our security. (EH, 283, 290–1)

Sarsefield, in reply, relates the clash of reason, force and unreason which effectively silences Edgar Huntly's wider optimism, extended as Sarsefield's response is from the authoritative position of a mentor and one able to unleash the powers of a "chief Magistrate," police and the contemporary psychiatric establishment:

> I will not torture your sensibility by recounting the incidents of [Clithero's] arrest and detention. You will imagine that his strong, but perverted reason exclaimed loudly against the injustice of his treatment.

> It was easy for him to outreason his antagonist, and nothing but force could subdue his opposition. (EH, 293)

Characteristically in Brown "perverted reason" meets necessary force, or, in fact, perverted reason grounded in authoritative force as it struggles against an energized agency drawing on similar and profoundly different resources where reason fails in the mysterious realms of human capability. The *paranoia* focused on deviants becomes a reflective yet necessary and immobilising response to their disturbing individual *paranoia* and destructive desires, as Brown both endorses and problematises the exercise of force.

The intensity of suspicion about these 'unknown' individuals for an early American readership is increased by Brown as he focuses ideas of contemporary political threat on the characters' past and present political allegiance, and their contact with known areas of revolutionary instability. Much has been written about the 'exposure' of Illuminati-type organizations in the United States between 1790-1810, and the ways in which they respond to linked American fears about the supposed Jacobin threat from post-1789 France spreading post-revolutionary instability.[55] Similar links have been established with the ferociously anti-democratic legislation

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[55]See, for instance, Jedediah Morse, A Sermon, Exhibiting the Present Dangers, and Consequent Duties of Citizens of the United States of America. Delivered at Charlestown, April 25, 1799. The Day of the National Fast (Charlestown, Mass. 1799)—[Morse based much of his argument on materials drawn from John Robison's Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe, Carried on in the Secret Meetings of Free Masons, Illuminati and Reading Societies (Edinburgh 1797; New York 1798), and Abbé Barruel's Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinism (Paris 1794; translated as Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism {New York 1799}), both of which, according to Henry May, had several American editions]—Vernon Stauffer, 'New England and the Bavarian Illuminati' in Columbia University (New York) Studies in History, Economics and Public Law, Vol.82, 1919, pp.1-374; May, The Enlightenment in America, pp.258-277; Gordon S. Wood, 'Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century' in The William and Mary Quarterly, Vol.XXXIX, No.3, July 1982, pp.401-441; Robert S. Levine, Conspiracy and Romance, pp.17-24.

passed in the United States in June and July of 1798 which subsequently became known as the Alien and Sedition Acts. As Thomas Jefferson indicated, such was the obsession in all forms of social discourse with these matters of threat and the infection of revolutionary extremism that "one who keeps himself cool and clear of the contagion, is so far below the point of ordinary conversation, that he finds himself insulated in every society."[56] One of the Founding Fathers at least believed that American society during the period which Brown wrote could be characterised, albeit from our present perspective, as rife with the illness of *paranoia*.

John C. Miller has detailed the political environment that produced the Alien and Sedition Acts in his excellent book, Crisis in Freedom, noting in political rhetoric, legislation and the media the escalating *paranoia* about, alternately, internal and external subversions of the American state, and in response to the Acts, the erosion of liberties hard won just two decades before. His assessment of the Federalist party's perception of threat draws together many of the themes already discussed here:

> That democracy was incompatible with order and security was owing, the Federalists supposed, to the depravity of human nature... Their struggle with the Republicans was a conflict between good and evil on a scale almost without precedent since biblical times.[57]

Miller also makes clear the deliberate use by the Federalist party elders of such *paranoia*, disseminating it from "the top and spread downward among the people"[58] in ways characteristic of totalitarian needs for control of perception to align the masses with the vision required by those in power. The infusion of this into law is a vital

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[56]Cited in John C. Miller, Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts (Boston 1951), p.8.

[57]John C. Miller, Crisis in Freedom, pp.15, 21.

[58]John C. Miller, Crisis in Freedom, p.22.

ingredient, and the legal ramifications of the Alien and Sedition Acts ensured this: in a sequence of test cases, primarily concerning sedition, the truth of an assertion was determined insufficient as a defence before the threat of bringing down state structures. The United States government and legal structure effectively emplaced a paranoid vision within its essential processes which overrode any claims to reality or truth in a way which has been repeated with varying intensities throughout American history in the face of dissidence and deviance from patterns of conformity. The reasons given are always contained in statements intended to quash reasoned opposition or debate, just as the Federalists justified the Alien and Sedition Acts as war measures, consolidating the continued and continuing process of America's vision of itself permanently at war.

It is a mistake, however, to view the Federalist responses to supposed subversion as simply a product of the period's counter–revolutionary concerns. Most of these responses can be traced as extensions of previously existent cultural tensions focused on dissidence and deviancy, and the materials that Charles Brockden Brown deploys in his writing concerning these issues confirm this, demonstrating how *paranoia* is part of the very fabric of social perception and engages with state fears. The history and identity of his deviant protagonists draws together the overt revolutionary qualities of Jacobinism with the perceived threat to state social equilibrium from vagrant and stateless individuals, especially those who have had contact with that other European outpost of revolutionary threat, Ireland. Carwin receives his education in radical thought and action at one of Ludloe's habitations in Ireland, before he travels through Spain and adopts the Catholic religion, developing amongst the Americans with whom he comes into contact, "[a] suspicion...that his

belief was counterfeited for some political purpose" (W, p.81). Clithero also emerges from Ireland to wreak havoc in America, just as one of Brown's major influences, William Godwin, had had his vagrant Caleb Williams seized upon his impersonation of an Irishman whilst attempting escape from Falkland's "police" to Ireland. This Irish context was as potent a threat in American eyes as the French connection, where Irish revolutionary activity against the British was seen to be part of the web of global subversion of democratic order in the late 1790's identified most frequently with Illuminism:

> It was not doubted that this dreaded [Irish] brotherhood had extended its operations to the United States: Wolf Tone, Hamilton Rowan and Napper Tandy, the leaders of the United Irishmen driven from Ireland, had settled temporarily in the United States. All the Irish in the Republic were under suspicion of belonging to this revolutionary organization....[and a] "dark and silent system of organized treason and massacre, imported by the UNITED IRISHMEN."[59]

Of final interest in this brief survey of deviant behaviour and Brown's representation of related and frictional *paranoia* is the extent to which state control of the indigent, subversive and mentally ill became an effort to limit the mobility, as Rothman puts it quoting from eighteenth-century American ordinances, of "persons who wander about."[60] The transformations which assured a more fluid and mobile

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[59]John C. Miller, Crisis in Freedom, p.45. Quotation from Gazette of the United States, 24 November, 1798. Seth Payson's comments on this situation are also 'illuminating': "In May 1798, the declaration and constitution of the American Society of United Irishmen were discovered and published in Philadelphia. This society was evidently founded on the principles of the illuminated lodges in Europe; and we are not left in the dark as to their object; for no-one, who will attentively read their constitution, can hesitate to say, it was to enlist and organize the discontented and fractious, and particularly *foreigners*, in the different parts of the United States, in order to diffuse the spirit, and promote the infernal designs, of Illuminism in this country." Seth Payson, Proofs of the Real Existence and Dangerous Tendency of Illuminism, pp.208–209. Text italics.

[60]Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum, p.27. The quotation is from the Acts and Laws of his Majesty's English Colony of Connecticut in New-England (New London, Conn. 1750). Further on, Rothman discusses the "first hospital exclusively for the insane in the American

society in the United States between 1780 and 1820 also selectively enhanced fears about the movements of potentially dangerous individuals. The efforts of welfare provision and disciplinary procedures were precisely to limit mobility, taking over from the inadequacies of familial and communal order in their abilities to absorb dangerous vagrants. These procedures sought to staticize and enclose those with mobility where movement was used for anything other than approved political and economic purposes in a period where movement outside localized boundaries, notwithstanding the state needs for trade and exploration, was inherently revolutionary.

A political *paranoia* about the threat of nomadic[61] figures is evident in Brown's narratives and embraces the problem to be explored in greater detail later on concerning the *paranoia* linked to movement, creativity, and alternative systems of perception. For Brown's deviant characters penetrate and move through space thought to be secure, possess extraordinary capabilities and different senses of the world, and indeed force upon their victims recognition of that difference in the midst of fragile epistemologies. Although the disturbing agencies of the deviants are creatively challenged by the narrators in the production of narratives, and thereby counter the destructive yet nonetheless creative energies extended from a Carwin, Clithero, Ormond, or Welbeck, the narratives' fascination for these characters engages with

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colonies, opened at Williamsburg, Virginia" where "[t]he burgesses, concerned that 'several persons of insane and disordered minds have frequently been found wandering in different parts of this colony,' established in 1769 a lunatic asylum. Although it might help to cure those not 'quite desperate,' its primary task was to preserve the peace of the community, to keep the insane from roaming about" (p.43). Rothman quotes here from William Henning, The Statutes at Large, VIII, 378–381, 'An Act to make Provision for the Support and Maintenance of Idiots, Lunatics, and Other Persons of Unsound Minds.'

[61]It is interesting, and perhaps not entirely coincidental given the anthropological and revolutionary concerns of the era, that the Oxford English Dictionary dates the adjectival use of *nomad* to 1798.

them as curiously vital for the libertarian debate, in their role as testers and breakers of authoritarian limits. What becomes an obsession for Brown is the ways in which democratic freedoms may grant both vulnerability and permission to take advantage of vulnerability, especially if one possesses extraordinary skills within the scope of duplicity and fanaticism. The paranoid process Brown reveals in his versions of American society is therefore both defence—as in Wendell Phillips' maxim, often quoted in these contexts, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty"—*and* guarantor of perpetual disintegrations of trust: democracy needs *paranoia* to maintain itself, yet finds the process continually denying the extension of democracy to all areas of existence.

In this sense, *paranoia* exists as an enclosing medium of interface between different powers, authorities and subversives, inclusive yet exclusive in their contradictory forms of knowledge and capability. Deleuze and Guattari articulate some useful senses of the nomadic position in relation to state authority for this argument, even though their analysis traces a larger history of nomadic *groups* and their use by state authorities to form and energize a war machine despite not being of the state. Freedom of movement always retains subversive potential so that:

> each time there is an operation against the State—subordination, rioting, guerilla warfare, or revolution as an act—it can be said that a war machine has revived, that a new nomadic potential has appeared, accompanied by the reconstitution of a smooth space or a manner of being in space as though it were smooth... It is in this sense that the response of the State against all that threatens to move beyond it is to striate space.[62]

The spatial concerns of Brown's writing frequently bear out this pattern, gaining

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[62]Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Volume Two, translated by Brian Massumi (Minnesota 1987), p.386.

momentum in the flows of detailing the politics and movements of a character like Ormond, and then folding back on itself and striating narrative space in efforts to reconfigure plot, decorum and sense. Constantia Dudley's father attempts to persuade her against a match with Ormond in just such an effort:

> What could be expected from [Ormond], half of whose life had been spent at the head of a band of Cossacks...and supporting by flagitious intrigues the tyranny of Catherine, and the other half in traversing inhospitable countries, and extinguishing what remained of clemency and justice by intercourse with savages?
>
> It was admitted that his energies were great, but misdirected, and that to restore them to the guidance of truth was not in itself impossible; but it was not so with relation to any power that she possessed... She must go with him to some corner of the world where his boasted system was established. What was the road to it he had carefully concealed, but it was evident that it lay beyond the precincts of civilized existence.[63]

Constantia Dudley, of course, ultimately becomes the agency of Ormond's defeat, and her valiant resistance, crucially effected through a "desperate and random" knife thrust, precedes "the inspection of bodies and the examination of witnesses" in a clash of necessities, both escaped from reason: "The violence of Ormond had been repulsed by equal violence... Not to deplore the necessity which had produced this act was impossible: but, since this necessity existed, it was surely not a deed to be thought upon with lasting horror, or to be allowed to generate remorse" (O, 291).

Brown's fascination with a character like Ormond does not therefore celebrate his extraordinary qualities despite the damage done in seeking alternative "systems"; nor does he place Ormond in the freedoms Deleuze and Guattari articulate for their vision of 'nomad thought,' which, according to their translator, "does not lodge itself

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[63]Charles Brockden Brown, Ormond; Or, The Secret Witness (1799; Bicentennial Edition, ed. Sydney Krause, S.W.Reid & Alexander Cowie. Kent State, Ohio 1982), p.211. Hereafter referred to as 'O.'

in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference."[64] The problem for Brown is that movements in "exteriority" and "difference" cannot forever evade the extensions of *paranoia* and their damage implicit in the binaries of *us and them*. The revolutionary optimisms of America at the end of the eighteenth century are countered by an increasingly conservative pessimism in Brown's writing which would look askance at such recent theoretical acceptance of "affirmation" and "force":

> The modus operandi of nomad thought is affirmation, even when its apparent object is negative. Force is not to be confused with power. Power is the domestication of force. Force in its wild state arrives from outside to break constraints and open new vistas. Power builds walls.[65]

For the forceful activities of Ormond, and indeed of a Carwin, Ludloe, or Clithero, do not inhabit a narrative familiar with Nietzsche, and have more to do with the relentlessness of obsessive, paranoid enclosures than the later explorations by American writers of the democratic and anti-paranoid potential in Dionysian and other strategies of release.

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> Plague operates by invisible agents, and we know not in what quarter it is about to attack us. No shield, therefore, can be lifted up against it. We fear it as we are terrified of the dark in which tho much of our panic be, doubtless, owing to the influence of education, and may be removed by habitual exposure to it, yet our defenseless condition and the invisible approaches of the danger may contribute to our alarms.[66]

Of all fears in the face of the unknown and the uncontrollable, none is as intense as

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[64]Brian Massumi, A User's Guide to *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Cambridge 1992), p.5.

[65]Massumi, A User's Guide to *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, p.6.

[66]Charles Brockden Brown, letter to James Brown, October 25, 1796, quoted in David Lee Clark, Charles Brockden Brown: Pioneer Voice of America (Durham, N.C. 1952), p.156.

the fear generated by disease, especially contagious disease. In the 1790's such fear retained the presence and resonance within life historian Fernand Braudel attributes it in relation to the "plague" of medieval Europe: "Leader of the dance of Death, it was a fixture, a permanent structure in men's lives."[67] Behind the evolution and spread of disease in history exists an enormous and complex system of causalities, as Braudel and other analysts have commented.[68] A crucial element of this system for humanity has always been the economic structures and interdependencies of and between social groupings, in direct relation to the parasitic dimension of all disease. Where bacillae require certain host conditions and movements to maintain their existence and initiate their distribution, so economic enterprise requires certain organizations of people to operate successfully and enable expansion. In the merging of their parasitic relationships, the history of economy has consequently been the history of the distribution of epidemics, where, to put it very simply, the spread of disease has followed and adjusted itself to trade routes. Furthermore, the history of epidemics indicates with great clarity the demarcations of social groupings and their parasitic relationships; Braudel again: "At the first sign of the disease, the rich whenever possible took hurried flight...The poor remained alone, penned up in the contaminated town where the State fed them, isolated them, blockaded them and kept them under observation."[69]

Brown's novels deal extensively with these issues in their depiction of epidemic

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[67]Fernand Braudel, The Structures of Everyday Life: The Limits of the Possible. Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century, Volume One, translated by Siân Reynolds, (London 1988), p.78.

[68]See, for instance, William H. McNeill, Plagues and Peoples (New York 1977).

[69]Braudel, The Structures of Everyday Life, p.85.

situations, and in particular the states of anxiety generated by the invasion of an unknown and invisible parasitic force which alternately upsets and hardens the pre-existent forms of social parasitism. *Paranoia* seems always a part of parasitism, developed in the exchanges of anxiety between host and guest, oscillating as circumstance dictates and exploitation and symbiosis fluctuate. Michel Serres has demonstrated in his book The Parasite (1982) that the presence of any parasitic action involves fundamental changes in the cultural matrix of energies, be they energies of signification or simply of exchange, offering the possibility both of destabilization and restoration of order. The presence of disease materials in Brown's novels exemplifies this action, analyzing disorder against which the protagonists must exert themselves until the point is reached where they and forms of social order have restored stability against what is frequently viewed as an internal attack on minds, bodies and communities.[70] As we shall see, this involves various paranoid actions of defence, though before observing this in the texts it is worth looking in detail at the historical background of epidemics from which Brown drew, and at the ways in which political control reacts to such invasions.

Yellow fever epidemics struck the north eastern United States several times between 1790 and the early years of the nineteenth century, probably as a result of the communication links forged between the United States, the Caribbean, and the west coast of Africa to facilitate the slave trade. Charles Brockden Brown had personal

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[70]Charles Brockden Brown's Monthly Magazine, August 1799, Vol.1, No.5, published an 'Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman in Philadelphia to his Friend in England, dated July 7, 1799,' almost certainly written by Brown himself. In it the following passage occurs: "We rely upon the rigorous execution of a quarantine law for the security of the place. This can only be compared to attempting a defence by the outworks, while the enemy is already in possession of the citadel" (p.327).

experience of these outbreaks in both Philadelphia, in 1793 and 1797, and New York in 1798, even surviving an attack of the disease himself in 1798.[71] In a series of informative articles, Shirley Samuels has detailed the range to which Brown's use of disease materials and other issues involving the disturbance of social order extends in their commentary on individual and communal organization in urban America of the 1790's.[72] Beginning from the identification of a "conjunction between contagion and politics," she goes on to link these intertwining forces with social controls focused primarily at the level of the family "as a way of countering the linked threats of revolution, contagion, and political and sexual infidelity,"[73] extending this initially into a reading of Arthur Mervyn which sees Mervyn's progress through the novel as a movement from exclusion back into the socio-economic securities of the familial cell. This in turn registers the re-emplacement of order by the "larger field of social discourses and practices"[74] from which the novel is seen to emanate, organized primarily in Samuels' view by the relationship of control and supersedence existent between the asylum and the family, especially where she endorses Foucault's view that "the eighteenth century witnessed a major shift from a concept of family as a 'model' or analogue of government to a concept of the family as an 'instrument' of

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[71]Donald A. Ringe, Charles Brockden Brown (Revised Edition; Boston 1991), p.xi.

[72]Shirley Samuels, 'Plague and Politics in 1793: Arthur Mervyn' in Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and Arts, 1985, 27 (3), pp.225-246; 'The Family, the State, and the Novel in the Early Republic' in American Quarterly, 1986, 38, 3, pp.381-395; 'Infidelity and Contagion: The Rhetoric of Revolution' in Early American Literature, 1987, 22, pp.183-191; 'Wieland: Alien and Infidel' in Early American Literature, 1990, 25, pp.46-66.

[73]Samuels, 'Plague and Politics in 1793: Arthur Mervyn,' pp.225-226.

[74]Samuels, 'Plague and Politics in 1793: Arthur Mervyn,' p.226.

government."[75] Whilst Samuels' analyses penetrate quite deeply the relationships of social control in the face of epidemic and political disorders, her concentration on the asylum/family connections tends to gloss over Brown's assertion in Arthur Mervyn, as in all his novels, of the key relationship between individuals and their fears in the face of external controls. In this sense, it seems crucial that all of the novels dealt with here feature endings in which the protagonists remain single and most leave America for Europe; even Arthur Mervyn, ostensibly bound for conjugal bliss with his "mamma" Achsa Fielding, has yet to be married at the end of the novel, and registers some not unimportant doubts whose language seems vital with regard to Mervyn's progress through disease and disorder:

> I merely write to allay these tumults which our necessary separation produces; to aid me in calling up a little patience till the time arrives when our persons, like our minds, shall be united forever. That time—may nothing happen to prevent—but nothing can happen. But why these ominous misgivings just now? My love has infected me with these unworthy terrors, for she has them too.[76]

Infection remains the major fear throughout the novel, and is combatted by political and individual strategies of containment and exclusion. An analysis of the systems of fear and confidences generated in turn by these strategies will demonstrate that their effects of alienation are registered individually in line with the effect on Brown of the influence of Godwin and Rousseau. Brown's protagonists are not so much existentialist heroines and heroes making their way through adversity as one might view an Ishmael or a Raskolnikov; rather, they are early explorations of consciousness and anxiety as

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[75]Samuels, 'The Family, the State, and the Novel in the Early Republic,' p.388. Samuels draws from Michel Foucault, 'Governmentality' in Ideology and Consensus, 1979, 6, p.17.

[76]Charles Brockden Brown, Arthur Mervyn; Or, Memoirs of the Year 1793 (1799–1800; Bicentennial Edition, ed. Sydney Krause, S. W. Reid & Alexander Cowie. Kent State, Ohio 1980), p.445. Hereafter referred to as 'AM.'

American and Western culture emerged from the restraints and false optimisms of the Enlightenment. Effectively, Brown's texts engage themselves in the tensions between an idea of individuality and its orientations within the "larger field of social discourses and practices."

As numerous studies of the history of epidemics or plagues have discovered, cultural and political reactions to these catastrophes involve the reduction and distortion of social perception and belief patterns, operating primarily in terms of an increased and centralized political control overlaid by religious designation. Faced with the havoc created by disease in any community, anxiety provokes an immediate attempt to identify origins or sources of disruption focusing on the other or that outside the social using rigidly structured moral prerogatives. In her book Illness as Metaphor, Susan Sontag determines that the cultural use of metaphor surrounding disease is utilized to explain the threat to self or an internalized community, and she states that: "The medieval experience of the plague was firmly tied to notions of moral pollution, and people invariably looked for a scapegoat external to the stricken community."[77] Such reaction was widespread following the yellow fever epidemics of the 1790's in America, and was given a specific political orientation due to the proximity to upheavals in France, as the Gazette of the United States exemplifies in its connection of Jacobinism to disease:

> God had sent out one as a corrective of the other. Our cities have been punished in proportion to the extent of Jacobinism; and in general at least three out of four of the persons who have perished by pestilence have been over zealous partizans.[78]

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[77]Susan Sontag, Illness as Metaphor (New York 1978), p.71.

[78]Gazette of the United States, June 21, 1800, cited in John C. Miller, Crisis in Freedom, p.40.

The political controls which fuel this distorted perception move in very deliberate ways towards an understanding and organization of epidemic confusions. Michel Foucault firmly places the socio-political impulse behind contemporary developments of panoptic surveillance controls in disciplinary actions alongside the regulations concerning epidemics. In the face of disease, as in penology, power exerts itself towards its fundamental dream of total vision and analysis, seeking to:

> ...'prevent anyone from concealing and dealing with those sick of the contagion, unknown to the magistrates.' The registration of the pathological must be constantly centralized...
> The plague is met by order; its function is to sort out every possible confusion: that of the disease, which is transmitted when bodies are mixed together; that of the evil, which is increased when fear and death overcome prohibitions... Against the plague, which is a mixture, discipline brings into play its power, which is one of analysis...
> Underlying disciplinary projects the image of the plague stands for all forms of confusion and disorder.[79]

The action of power in these circumstances is paranoid: its energies are directed towards centralization in an effort to set up a complete referentiality where everything has meaning and is connected to an analytic centre, and where multiplicities, or "a mixture," are reduced to manageable dualities or singularities. In doing so it sets up orders organized by intensified belief patterns whose effort is to dispell ambiguity and uncertainty by an urgent location of evil, evil effectively being disorder or the unknown. The violence generated by such action is well-known, exerted on the community primarily in terms of staticity and separation.

It is worth connecting Foucault's pertinent remarks to the career of a doctor working amid the epidemics in Philadelphia in the 1790's who was certainly known to Charles Brockden Brown, and whose work has already been approached. Benjamin

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[79]Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, translated by A. M. Sheridan (London 1987), pp.196-199.

Rush was a prominent figure in the medical and establishment circles of the United States at this time as well as being a member, simultaneously with Brown, of the Philadelphia Philosophical Society. As a young radical, it seems probable that Brown would have at least been aware of Rush because of the latter's prominence and his adherence to philosophical tenets of scientific materialism, precisely the position Brown's novels challenge in their various ways. Rush admired the scientific theories of Joseph Priestley, and organized his medical approach around necessitarian concepts which posited human life as part of a mechanical system, an attitude which, in the supposed perfections of its totality, both cemented his sense of the correctness of his own medical outlook, and brought him into conflict with other doctors of different persuasions. Rush also followed his acknowledged master, Dr William Cullen, in orienting his medical technique around an almost structuralist concept of disease, believing disease to be ordered by an accessible sequence of laws, the discovery of which would locate a "single cause of all disease."[80] The fusion of this scientific singularity with the political and millennial views Rush publicly espoused, such as his assertion that "I consider it possible to convert men into republican machines,"[81] demonstrates the ways in which late-eighteenth-century thought and practice could be formulated and exercised to the point in which fanaticism and *paranoia* are more than latent. Henry F. May suggests this when he says that "Rush...serves as the best possible warning of the dangers of Enlightenment without the slightest mixture of

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[80]May, The Enlightenment in America, p.208.

[81]Benjamin Rush, 'Of The Mode of Education Proper in a Republic,' in Essays: Literary, Moral and Philosophical, ed. Michael Meranze (New York 1988), p.9.

skepticism."[82] In the intensity of epidemic conditions, as biographers and commentators indicate, Rush manifested many of the tendencies Foucault ascribes to socio–political reactions to disease. William Hedges finds that "Rush's piety tends in a crisis to become a crude extension of his deep–seated need to believe himself in the right, to believe he is in possession of the truth. Those who disagree with him become his persecutors,"[83] whilst Carl Binger finds a "paranoid suspiciousness" in Rush in circumstances in which "(h)e simply had to be right, especially since he felt appointed by God to save his afflicted city."[84] James J. Abraham similarly suggests that Rush was "a man of very fixed ideas...one who was almost a fanatic in the advantages of phlebotomy" and states that he suffered a mild "persecution mania" during the 1793 epidemic in Philadelphia.[85] The intersections here of religion, medical dogma, and the control of human energies through circulatory regulation need assertion in the circumstances of the medical rivalries in the 1793 epidemic, and the medical scenarios detailed by Brown. Particularly important are the tensions of control which extend from the professional or official figure—here the doctor—rendering that figure the centralization point for fears about chaos, and the point from which sanctioned and dictatorial powers emanate. Braudel and McNeill detail the fears against doctors in

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[82]May, The Enlightenment in America, p.208.

[83]William Hedges, 'Benjamin Rush, Charles Brockden Brown, and the American Plague Year' in Early American Literature (7), 1972–1973, p.299.

[84]Carl Binger, Revolutionary Doctor: Benjamin Rush 1746–1813 (New York 1966), pp.207, 230.

[85]James J. Abraham, Lettsom: His Life, Times, Friends and Descendants (London 1933), pp.367, 370. In somewhat different circumstances, General Jack D. Ripper provides a more modern example of such paranoid phlebotomy, where a pre–emptive nuclear strike is launched against the Soviet Union to counter communist subversion and the threat to the purity of American "precious bodily fluids." See Dr. Strangelove; Or, How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb (Stanley Kubrick 1964).

epidemic situations according, respectively, to their cost and the utter uselessness and pain of their remedies. Rush, in a letter to his wife Julia during the 1793 epidemic, articulates the fear of the professional in revealingly political terms, when he describes the yellow fever as a "monarchical disorder,"[86] which whilst it projects American revolutionary identifications of the fever's source, also reflects fundamental fears about the disruption of political order, particularly as it may affect the hierarchy in which the doctor as expert may take her/his place.

These brief comments on Benjamin Rush provide historical insights to any analysis of the epidemics in novels like Arthur Mervyn and Ormond. Brown's depictions are complex interweavings of social and political anxieties within the interaction of community and individual, and domestic and international concerns, as Constantia Dudley's reaction to the first onset of fever in Philadelphia reveals:

> Contagious diseases, she well knew, periodically visited and laid waste the Greek and Egyptian cities. It constituted no small part of that mass of evil, political and physical, by which that portion of the world has been so long afflicted. That a pest equally malignant had assailed the metropolis of her own country—a town famous for the salubrity of its airs and the perfection of its police—had something in it so wild and uncouth, that she could not reconcile herself to the possibility of such an event. (O, p.35)

Barring medical issues and the disruption of the family, which emerge later in the novel, all the important elements of control and fear surrounding disease within the American context are present in this paragraph. The fear that corruption from the Old World (represented here in terms of classical antiquity but paragraphs later given a contemporary European reference) might spread to the New telescopes provincially into fears of metropolitan disruption, where the "perfection" of the Philadelphia police

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[86]Hedges, 'Benjamin Rush, Charles Brockden Brown, and the American Plague Year,' p.299.

is under threat. All is oriented around the notion of evil, in which the "political" complements the "physical"—an important distinction when Brown comes to depict burial gangs touring the city removing the dead and the half-dead alike; whilst evil is determined as an invasive force, penetrating the internalized projection of the American metropolis, internalized even to the extent of its syntactical position between dashes.

Brown's ability to provide acute analyses of the anxieties in these epidemic situations operates, as in Defoe's A Journal of the Plague Year (1722), from his narratives' focus on and extension from individual experience. Arthur Mervyn in particular uses the device of a series of layered first person narratives to provide different temporalities and experiences, highlighting the experience of the epidemic most effectively through individual response. Foucault and Sontag both make the point that plague is regarded as an attack on the community in terms correlative to the state of political order and that the individual, where such order is threatened, is staticized and determined as healthy or infected very quickly under epidemic controls. In both Ormond and Arthur Mervyn the narrator and/or chief protagonist are constantly reaffirmed as individuals within varyingly destructive enclosures of infection and political control, wherein they struggle to maintain their mobility and difference, and both novels, interestingly enough, detail their protagonists' movements in contradistinction to that of the masses. Thus, Constantia Dudley remains in Philadelphia and moves around the town whilst a large part of the population head out into the country; and Arthur Mervyn similarly moves into, around, out of, and back into Philadelphia against the predominant flows of people. Staticity becomes synonymous with death, just as characters fear their potential incarceration in the

notorious Bush Hill hospital, which in actual fact was a house converted by order of the citizens committee:

> I had indeed a roof over my head. I should not perish in the public way; but what was my ground for hoping to continue under this roof? My sickness being suspected, I should be dragged in a cart to the hospital; where I should, indeed, die, but not with the consolation of loneliness and silence. Dying groans were the only music, and livid corpses were the only spectacle, to which I should there be introduced. (AM, pp.154–155)

The anxieties of the individual are placed frictionally within the structures of epidemic control, themselves only an intensification of the organizations of power within the culture, so that the individual resists emergency measures and expresses his fears of enclosure through programmed millennial images: effectively, forms of *paranoia* operating against and yet in formation with one another, their belief patterns stemming from similar desires for control.

These connections of anxiety receive their confirmation in Arthur Mervyn by the unusual shift in perception which occurs when Mervyn abruptly overcomes the narrative's expressed fear of the Bush Hill hospital and decides to go there and "offer [him]self as a superintendent." Mervyn adds: "At least while I had the power, I was bound to exert it to the wisest purposes. I resolved to seek the City Hall immediately..." (AM, pp.179–180). Similarly, when visiting Welbeck in prison Mervyn expresses a desire to learn "new motives to sincerity and rectitude" (AM, p.334), a further gravitation inwards towards the centres of control from his nomadic sequence of movements. In Deleuze and Guattari's terms Mervyn undergoes a reterritorialization, is reclaimed from the peripheral and fluid position he maintains in his nomadic singularity in the face of the epidemic controls, back toward sanctioned institutions. From fear of authoritarian control Mervyn moves to a position embracing

the securities offered by centralized surveillance activities, in line with Shirley Samuels' description of the Philadelphian community's reaction to the reform of the Bush Hill hospital, where: "The new administration reformed the institution so successfully that people began to desire the hospital, and had finally to certify that they were indeed suffering from the plague in order to be admitted there."[87] This marks out the dream of political control: to make the controlled desire their ordering, a process dependent upon the simultaneous alignment of mass anxieties with those of authority.

The abruptness of Mervyn's change from fear of, to acceptance and participation in, socio-political control is tempered somewhat by the fact that his passage through the novel becomes one exemplifying the re-emplacement of social orders. Initially destitute and parasitic, and engaged in a series of penetrations to the centre of domestic privacies, Mervyn later turns these actions into forms of experiential therapy for himself and those around him, so that he can act as an agent of reassurance as the second part of the text moves on from the epidemic to the restoration of order. This reassurance essentially involves the removal of suspicions about Mervyn for the other characters—primarily through the agency of his "mentor" Dr Stevens and his wife, signifying acceptance by the social controls of medicine and 'family' respectively—and concurrently his reintegration with them and the reconstructed society on several different levels. Politically, we have already seen how Mervyn's desires reorient themselves towards control, whilst his penetrative actions similarly become reflections of the desire to see all social space ordered, as when he seeks Clemenza Lodi in a brothel:

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[87]Samuels, 'Plague and Politics in 1793: Arthur Mervyn,' p.233.

> Once more I reflected on the rectitude of my intentions...on the benefits of my expedition, and of gaining access to the object of my visit without interruption or delay... I thought, with scornful emotions, on the bars and hinderances which pride, and caprice, and delusive maxims of decorum, raise in the way of human intercourse. I spurned at these semblances and substitutes of honesty, and delighted to shake such fetters into the air and trample such impediments to dust. I wanted to see a human being, in order to promote her happiness. It was doubtful whether she was within twenty paces of the spot where I stood. The doubt was to be solved. How? By examining the space.
> (AM, p.317)

Mervyn's purpose here and elsewhere in the second part of the novel involves intrusions and surveillances designed to clarify sexual and familial organization, primarily by opening up these spaces to language (or "human intercourse") and thus control through the arrangement of discourse. Ostensibly, Mervyn seeks to dispell the *paranoia* of the plague experience in himself and others, an effort undertaken in the telling of the stories, and then promote reintegration and order, acting as a conduit both as a literary device and as an individual force for social transformation. The problem is, however, that Mervyn's transformation from innocence to experience—within the scope of the contemporary Romantic process—involves him in an absorption of the practices of social order which threaten and, indeed, ensure the reintroduction of a paranoid potential, exactly within Mervyn's craving for familial and political correctness. He becomes an agent seeking knowledge and directing suspicion having been transformed from the suspicious circumstances of an unknown agency, developing systems of certainty and, in Serres' phrase, "non-knowledge," out of the determined chaos of his past and the epidemic experience. He can carry the temporarily detoxified but always available virus of *paranoia* back into the new American state's dream of social order which may require its activity at another opportune political moment.

4. *Eternal Melancholy*
'Somnambulism. A Fragment'

A short story by Brown entitled 'Somnambulism. A Fragment,' and published anonymously by him in his Literary Magazine and American Register (Philadelphia, May 1805), provides a useful conclusion to this study of the narrative representation of certain paranoid qualities present within American social consciousness in the period. Indeed, it highlights with some intensity the extent to which Brown's fiction interrogates the pursuit of guilt, both as an internalized individual necessity, and as part of state and social processes designed to locate the certain origin of volition. Brown's fascination for this territory of human and interpersonal activity becomes more than just a confirmation of philosophical and psychological precepts, however, as his writing self–consciously turns on the creative elements contained within the destructive transformations he depicts. The story concerns the murder of a young woman travelling with her father at night in a remote part of the American countryside, and is narrated by the presumed murderer, a young man named Althorpe whom, it is proposed, committed the act whilst sleep–walking. The plot establishes a scope of anxieties resonant within the issues already discussed, and works its way through them to a point of abrupt narrative cessation appropriate to the drama of self–confession and the collective implosion of *paranoia* produced within a culture gripped by a range of obsessions: social and political infidelity, unexplained phenomena and their deviation from the humanly–designated mechanism of natural process (and thus from the control of reason), and the consequent application of cause and effect explanatory force which seeks above all to locate the origin of action and enforce law where knowledge may be discontinuous. If one builds in to this analysis Michel Foucault's assertion that "[t]here are two meanings of the word 'subject': subject to

someone else by control and dependence; and tied to [one's] own identity by a conscience or self–knowledge,"[88] then the narrative dramatizes the action of the latter as a *product* of the former, particularly in circumstances where "someone else" remains unknown.

As such, the story is replete with anxieties whose frictions with one another are used skillfully by Brown to provide momentum and surprise within a forerunner to the detective genre. An epigraph to the story develops an initial documentary realism, relating a murder case almost exactly the same as the one dealt with in the narrative. Some key phrases reside in this epigraph, accurately determining the dimension of the *paranoia* which afflicts the story's characters, and which, most interestingly in terms of the presentation of such perceptual alignments, targets the creative process itself, as that process comes under suspicion and finds itself linked to the destruction which becomes the focus of the narrative. The epigraph, from "the Vienna Gazette of June 14, 1784," describes a murder and fixes upon a young man known to sleep–walk as the perpetrator in language revealing for the context of the narrative which follows:

> ...the attention of physicians, and of the people, has been excited by the case of a young man, whose behaviour indicates perfect health in all respects but one. He has a habit of rising in his sleep, and performing a great many actions with as much order and exactness as when awake... After an accurate scrutiny, by the tribunal of the circle, he has been declared author of the murder: but what renders the case truly extraordinary is, that there are good reasons for believing that the deed was perpetrated by the youth while asleep, and was entirely unknown to himself.[89]

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[88]Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power' in Critical Inquiry, 8 (Summer 1982), p.781.

[89]Charles Brockden Brown, 'Somnambulism. A Fragment' in Somnambulism and Other Stories, ed. Alfred Weber (Frankfurt am Main 1987), p.5. Hereafter referred to as 'S.'

The story thus proceeds from an idea of "behaviour," "perfect health" and "order" as a set pattern against which deviance may be measured, and it is fitting in these early American circumstances that measurement extends by progression from the representatives of scientific knowledge, then "the people," before moving into the hands of a "tribunal." That is, initiated from the modern physician who retains significant political power in Ackernecht's useful differentiation between the medicine man and his modern counterpart, where the former "plays his role as the most irrational man in an irrational pattern," whilst the physician is "rationalizing even the irrational."[90] Combined with this, the notion of scrutiny from an authority seeking the "author" of the event, who "was entirely unknown to himself," suggests consummate and far–reaching tensions operating in the determination of certainty and the ways in which that certainty may be reached in social discourse.

The course of the narrative is simple yet provides a superstructure inside which a profoundly complex psychology is worked out: Althorpe, in a form of confession, tells of his acquaintance with Constantia Davis and her father, who have stayed for a period at his uncle's house. Mr Davis needs to leave urgently necessitating an overnight journey, and his daughter, the object of the narrator's passion, decides to accompany him. Althorpe attempts to dissuade both from their purpose, an action he becomes unable to explain to them in any convincing manner, and is only able to explain to the reader in terms of a fear of Constantia Davis's disinterest in him and potential marriage elsewhere, and, crucially, by a foreboding of the coming disaster.

Daughter and father leave and Althorpe, consumed by melancholy and excitement, sits

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[90]Erwin H. Ackernecht, 'Problems of Primitive Medicine' in Bulletin of the History of Medicine, XI, 5 (1942), quoted in Henri F. Ellenberger, The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry (New York 1970), p.48.

up brooding on the course of their journey until he falls asleep in a chair in the parlour. Whilst asleep Althorpe dreams he follows the father and daughter and attempts to avert the assassination of Constantia Davis. He is unsuccessful and pursues the murderer and exacts revenge. Awakened next morning by his uncle, Althorpe feels refreshed and sets to the work of the day until his new peace is shattered by news of Constantia Davis's murder. Althorpe thereafter relates the details of the night's happenings as gleaned "at different times, from the witnesses" (S, 13), until the narrative ends abruptly on Constantia's death at the house of a physician. The night's journey had been one in which the father and daughter had been pursued by a shadowy figure who remained on the periphery of their vision exciting curiosity and fear. At first they believe the figure to be Althorpe, providing a distant escort, but then a traveller reassures them that this must be the local "idiot," Nick Handyside, who was given to worrying strangers to the area by harmlessly pursuing them. When they are in the depths of the forest, however, a loud scream causes their horse and carriage to bolt, the carriage to be destroyed, dashed against a protruding oak, and the servant dispersed to locate the frightened animal. Leaving the exhausted Constantia, Mr Davis sets off for help but hears a pistol shot and returns to find his daughter mortally wounded. A nearby physician, Inglefield, arrives to help but Constantia Davis dies of a head wound.

The tale, therefore, is a narrative sandwiched between two forms of authoritative representation, and as such the central anxiety is that of the narrator, expressed directly in the articulation of feelings and sensations. Althorpe's remarks, however, also reveal the anxieties of the other characters—the Davis's and Althorpe's uncle, primarily—and the cultural anxiety oriented around specific targeted threats to

the cohesion and power of social order. The family, most immediately, experiences a fatal disruption which is worked out in the triangular relationship of father/daughter/suitor, with Althorpe depicted clearly as an outsider seeking to penetrate and emplace himself within social conformity. Indeed, he describes his position, without parents, as one of isolation under the care of his uncle: "My age and situation, in this family, rendered silence and submission my peculiar province" (S, 9). The reactions of father and daughter are correlatively forceful and suspicious as Althorpe's efforts of persuasion are repulsed: these efforts are viewed by Mr Davis as "interference" despite the superficial benevolence of his view of Althorpe; and by Constantia Davis as "overweening and fickle" presaging "mischief" despite her sense of the young man's feeling. Significantly, also, the only dialogue reported between Constantia and Althorpe is an explicit denial based assertively on independent female capability—a compounding of Althorpe's social anxieties by a rebuff both from the object of desire and the feminine. This factor sets up a further tension within the patriarchally organized discourse which consolidates a range of forces in an attempt to explore and control deviance, manipulating those most vulnerable and concluding with a woman's sacrifice.

However, the social priorities of family and gender become only a part of the wider energy concerning the threat of the unknown and irrational which infuses Brown's writing, as those qualities reflect the inexplicable force of nature. This issue actively sites Brown's fiction as transitional in its exploratory probing of phenomena and social disruption attendant upon the breakdown of Enlightenment certainties assembled to allow the force of reason under the momentums of fear accessibility to all parts of the perceived universe. Brown effectively documents here, as in his novels,

the action of accumulated anxieties transformed on contact with the inexplicable and irrational, particularly as a reflection of that inexplicability, into fears whose targets absorb and redistribute the destruction meted out to them.

Brown's debt to the radical thinkers of the immediate and preceding period as it contributes to this function of his writing has been indicated. What emerges as striking in these terms in this story, however—and it is a key part of Brown's creative and explorative action in his writing—is the explicit sense of a grappling with the tenets of sensory and social control, and the place within that schema of creative faculties as they extend from the political dicta underlying Enlightenment comprehension of the universe. Indeed, Brown's focus in 'Somnambulism. A Fragment' and in many of his other narratives is that central problem which has consumed psychologists from before the Enlightenment, through Freud, to the present: is the unconscious a manifestation of volitional autonomous action; or is it the result of social conditioning? The most obvious target for the text are the initial chapters of Leviathan (1651), where Hobbes runs through "Sense," "Imagination" and "Reason and Science" as they may be seen to determine the dimensions "Of Man." Brown's consideration of these political imperatives are so precise, in fact, that Hobbes' examples of sensory order and disorder reappear in the actions of Althorpe, particularly in the references to "fancy" and "imagination," and the circumstances of his falling asleep and subsequent dream. Hobbes' assertion at the beginning of Leviathan that "there is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense," and that imagination "is nothing but *decaying sense*,"[91] emplaces an associative view of mental processes, allowing

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[91]Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1979), pp.85, 88. Text italics.

the prescription of causality and the determination of responsibility according to observed phenomena. Hobbes then discusses the problems for this view presented by dreams and visions, or non–sentient perception, and identifies "distemper of some of the inward parts of the Body" as their cause in line with the contemporary psychiatric approach, giving an example where:

> The most difficult discerning of a mans Dream, from his waking thoughts, is then, when by some accident we observe not that we have slept: which is easie to happen to a man full of fearfull thoughts; and whose conscience is much troubled; and that sleepeth, without the circumstances, of going to bed, or putting off his clothes, as one that noddeth in a chayre.[92]

Althorpe follows this course but his circumstances are disturbed by the prominence throughout his sleeping and dreaming of the intangibility and expansions offered within his non–sentient process. Hobbes' requirement that "fancy and imagination needs to be held in strict check by judgement"[93] is overridden by the extraordinary force of the unknown energy behind the dream, and the narrative responds by seeking causal explanations attached to the idea that:

> "[a]ll Fancies are motions within us, reliques of those made in the sense... In summe, the Discourse of the Mind, when it is governed by designe, is nothing but *Seeking*, or the faculty of Invention...a hunting out of the causes, of some effect, present or past, or of the effects, of some present or past cause...[94]

But the absence of cause in the narrative—enforced as the only available control of the uncontrollable—denies this tracing, despite the production through confession of "designe," and denies the location sought by the Hobbesian enforcement of "civill

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[92]Hobbes, Leviathan, p.91.

[93]R. L. Brett, Fancy and Imagination (London 1969), p.11.

[94]Hobbes, Leviathan, pp.94, 96.

Obedience" where "no man therefore can conceive anything but he must conceive it in some place,"[95] an obsession with physical origin whose destruction continues today by direct inheritance in the use of lobotomy and electroshock 'therapy.'

The central issue in 'Somnambulism' in these terms is the operation of an inexplicable natural force outside the prescribed norms of behaviour, which effects complete control over human capability beyond the resources of reason and scientific knowledge. It is this issue which directly reflects the contemporary Mesmeric controversy and linked political fears noted at the end of Chapter One. Thus the narratorial anxiety of Althorpe concerning Constantia, apparent as *paranoia* within the agency of "melancholy," meets the force of social anxiety resulting in the death of a woman through the distortion of passion. The result is the classic culmination of obsession and control, staticity and death, a textual action with its own Hobbesian lineage, as Leo Braudy reminds us, where Hobbes "explained that language was really invented to facilitate social order by repressing the non-sociable self."[96]

To explore this equation further, for equation it becomes under the aegis of rational explanatory force seeking to determine responsibility, it is worth following the narrative through to trace its assemblage of perception and the ways in which the writing projects anxiety as a function of creatively confronting the unknown. The unknown in the story, of course, is somnambulism, unknown to the point of being absent entirely from the text except in the epigraph which preempts the narrative, setting up tensions within somnambulism's status as a departure from volition. Althorpe's nocturnal activity prescribes a spectrum of terrors, the primary energy

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[95]Hobbes, Leviathan, pp.93, 99.

[96]Leo Braudy, 'Providence, Paranoia, and the Novel' in E.L.H., 48, 1981, p.621.

arising in the first-person narrative as the pure terror that he remains "unknown to himself," capable of action beyond the range of sentience and conscious control,[97] and therefore outside the programmes of perception laid out by Hobbes and Locke, and toying with the assertions of Brown's contemporary, Benjamin Rush, that, "Dreaming, I have said, is a transient paroxysm of delirium. Somnambulism is nothing but a higher grade of the same disease. It is a transient paroxysm of madness."[98] Where Hobbes requires a site of perceptual and experiential origin, the narrative can only provide the absence available in Althorpe's dream, and outside itself, the displaced territory of the epigraph, establishing the paranoid effort made by the narrative to demarcate the boundary of inside and out. The "unknown" also highlights the range of perceptual inadequacies and ambiguities evident in the other characters' knowledge, particularly of themselves and one another, all of which ferment together to develop the narrative's atmosphere of suspicion based on a sequence of socially-exerted presuppositions. Althorpe's reflections on his own mental and social state in fact come to reflect the fragility of the other characters' ability to interrelate, so that the portrayal of events and its absent cause becomes a symptom of a more general malaise of social insecurity and involuntary enforcement of desire. In consequence, the reliance on cause/effect structures consistently finds itself without an identifiable cause, allowing narrator, characters and reader alike the opportunity to perceive the abyss, or absence, from which springs *paranoia*:

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[97]Brown is known to have written a novel entitled Sky-Walk; or, The Man Unknown to Himself, completed in December 1797 but unpublished and since lost. It is probable that both 'Somnambulism. A Fragment' and Edgar Huntly; or, Memoirs of a Sleep-Walker (1799) incorporate parts of the earlier text; see 'S,' p.149.

[98]Benjamin Rush, Medical Inquiries and Observations Upon the Diseases of the Mind (Philadelphia 1812), p.304.

All men are, at times, influenced by inexplicable sentiments. Ideas haunt them in spite of all their efforts to discard them. Prepossessions are entertained, for which their reason is unable to discover any adequate cause. The strength of a belief, when it is destitute of any rational foundation, seems, of itself, to furnish a new ground for credulity. We first admit a powerful persuasion, and then, from reflecting on the insufficiency of the ground on which it is built, instead of being prompted to dismiss it, we become more forcibly attached to it.

I had received little of the education of design. I owed the formation of my character chiefly to accident. I shall not pretend to determine in what degree I was credulous or superstitious. A belief for which I could not rationally account, I was sufficiently prone to consider as the work of some invisible agent; as an intimation from the great source of existence and knowledge (S, p.8).

The tension here surrounds the efficacy of the human use of rationality against phenomena outside rationality's sphere of influence. Althorpe focuses this by his own disclaimer attributing "accident" to those areas of development and experience outside comprehension, which seeks simultaneously to link them to "design" and tie them into a structure of accountability. When any "design" fails to materialize, designation takes over and the problem of unaccountable phenomena rapidly finds its articulation in a vocabulary expressive of political fears interwoven with the creative surge attending the discovery and exploration of unknown human energies:

> The revolution was almost incredible which my mind had undergone, in consequence of these incidents. It was so abrupt and entire that my soul seemed to have passed into a new form.
> ...At length, as I have said, I sunk into profound slumber, if that slumber can be termed profound, in which my fancy was incessantly employed in calling up the forms, into new combinations, which had constituted my waking reveries. (S, pp.11–12)

This passage also highlights the need to reflect on the creative and expansive possibilities allowed within the perceptual philosophies of the Enlightenment. Locke's famous concept of human consciousness entering experience as a *tabula rasa* which accumulates associative experiences exposes an alternative to the control available in

a system of causal reliance, especially here in terms of the potential for humanity to rejuvenate and embrace new experiential process, as the revolutionary movements of the eighteenth century asserted in their claims to moral rectitude. The "revolution," however, is swiftly terminated as Althorpe's personal recollections end soon afterward in a compact relation of his dream introduced as "ideas...full of confusion and inaccuracy," and centred crucially around "pursuit of the guilty...detected...in an artful disguise" (S, p.12). At the point where detection of culpability may be made, or the circumstances of Althorpe's excited mental condition explored, the narrative produces brevity and an intense ambivalence concerning the creative possibilities of such excitement. Guilt is excavated as a reflective quality and possibility for all in the realm of unconscious action, and the narrative then pursues the accounts of witnesses to determine what such energy may perform, whilst forestalling its actual presence in the text.

The anxiety permeating the narrative and projected at the unknown receives its transformation into fear—just as Althorpe's anxiety, it seems, transforms through dream into action—as it becomes clear that what occurs within Althorpe's non-sentience is an appalling and undeviating *certainty*, something made clear in Adolf Hitler's remark in a radio speech in Munich, March 14, 1936, when he said, "I go my way with the assurance of a somnambulist."[99] Energy without fixed origin, appraised and launched within the characterization, so often termed *natural*, of inhumanly directed certainty—the Davis's, crucially, are told "that they had nothing to dread from human interference" (S, p.19)—describes the parabola on and within which *paranoia*

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[99]Cited in Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (London 1964), p.298.

becomes such a prevalent (re)action. For in the face of such certainty, where destruction always lurks to confirm *paranoia*, the proclaimed certainty of Enlightenment system disintegrates and hardens into forms of surveillance and control generated within and without the human subject, projecting back paranoid certainties of insane and implosive force. Certainty then becomes in Brown the staticity and silence of confirmed fear, forged in the knowledge of human participation in an unremitting cycle—which signals the end of so many of his novels and this narrative, where his protagonists become certain of their and others' complicity in this cycle of fear breeding fears.

This action becomes clear in the concluding part of the narrative which offers the events of the night at a safe remove. Not only is restraint put on any further exploration of creative energy in human experience but the detective function of the narrative proceeds to the crime and thereafter closes down any speculative effort by the introduction of law and science, in the person of the physician, and the most effective measure, the abrupt ending of the text. The ending, in fact, occurs as the ambivalence about creativity violently oscillates towards repulsion as the destructive consequences of such energy are placed in the context of law. The physician, Inglefield, comes upon the victim and the narrative articulates the primary concerns for social order: "To the physician the scene was inexplicable. Who was the author of this distress; by whom was the pistol discharged; whether through some untoward chance or with design, he was as yet uninformed..." (S, p.23). The "author" is sought as responsible for the destruction and threat to order (by the possible introduction of another form of uncontrollable consciousness—"chance or...design") which may accompany creative energy; he concedes to the pervasive anxiety turned fearful and

paranoid in its efforts to locate the unaccountable by ceasing to write, a destruction paralleled by the realization of his own agency in the destruction of Constantia Davis, and a return to his "peculiar province" of "silence and submission."

The cumulative effect of the narrative strategy and the balance of elements within it is to represent a disturbance of the pattern of trust in nature, a formulation from the period of the problem endemic to American views of their own territory and consciousness. This generates an ambivalence simultaneously aware of the promise sustained in prototype senses of Manifest Destiny, whilst propelled by the erosion of Enlightenment mechanistic views and the desire to enclose and use nature, into suspicion, as the grids of human perception fit neither nature nor the patterns of conformity assembled by and for themselves. Nature, of course, remains inscrutable, and the urge for certainty continues and moves into a focus on human agency in the circumstances, juxtaposing human energies with the natural cycles assumed to be their origin. In turn, the writing represents this dilemma for the functions of social power in its use of symbol, effectively dramatizing the contemporary debate in literary consciousness and practice identified by Paul De Man as a friction and regression between symbol and allegory. De Man, through Hans-Georg Gadamer, highlights the priorities given to symbolism over allegory as Romanticism took hold in Western literature, which seek the point where:

> subjectivity of experience is preserved when it is translated into language; the world is then no longer seen as a configuration of entities that designate a plurality of distinct and isolated meanings, but as a configuration of symbols ultimately leading to a total, single, and universal meaning. This appeal to the infinity of a totality constitutes the main attraction of the symbol as opposed to allegory, a sign that refers to one specific meaning and thus exhausts its suggestive

potentialities once it has been deciphered.[100]

This effort has clear implications for the paranoid presence at this stage in Western consciousness, highlighting in the transfer of meaning between perceptual strategies the urge for totality driven on from obsessions with "specific meaning" towards "intimation[s] from the great source of existence and knowledge" (S, p.8). De Man, however, extends the situation's complexity by investigating the relationship between subject and object in early nineteenth century Romanticism as it reveals, in fact, the failure of symbolic totalities to provide a lucidity or connectivity tenable in the face of nature and human experience:

> The dialectical relationship between subject and object is no longer the central statement of romantic thought, but this dialectic is now located entirely in the temporal relationships that exist within a system of allegorical signs. It becomes a conflict between a conception of the self seen in its authentically temporal predicament and a defensive strategy that tries to hide from this negative self-knowledge. On the level of language the asserted superiority of the symbol over allegory, so frequent during the nineteenth century, is one of the forms taken by this tenacious self-mystification.[101]

Brown's writing in 'Somnambulism' presents this problem precisely as it operates in the conflict dramatized between nature and the organization of power asserted by the subject and cultural hegemony. At the forefront of nature's implication in the murder is an oak tree mentioned early on in the narrative as an obstacle to travellers on the road taken by Constantia Davis and her father. The language used is again revealing of the tensions present in the story, here beginning the development of what ostensibly may be a symbol of human interaction with nature, while underneath these

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[100]Paul De Man, 'The Rhetoric of Temporality' in Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism (London 1983), p.188.

[101]De Man, 'The Rhetoric of Temporality,' p.208.

preparations simmers an ambivalence more disposed toward the threat posed by nature to the human ordering of the landscape:

> I imagined the possibility of their guide's forgetting the position of a certain oak that grew in the road. It was an ancient tree, whose boughs extended, on all sides, to an extraordinary distance. They seemed disposed by nature in that way in which they would produce the most ample circumference of shade. I could not recollect any other obstruction from which much was to be feared (S, p.11).

The beneficence of the oak in its shade, age and wider cultural resonance as a representation of solidity and dependability stands beside the malignant qualities detected in its position athwart human progression, boughs extended almost anthropomorphically to restrain those confronting it. In this way the symbol becomes polarized, in effect soaking up the *paranoia* generated around it by human perception determining the inability of the symbol to represent the totality of cause. The oak is so central and inclusive an icon in the story that it assumes the 'presence' of a symbol, drawing in a series of meanings and representing a sequence of interconnected qualities. The urge of the narrative for coherence and fixed meaning, however, fixes it as a lynchpin of the threat of natural and objective force, and its representation becomes allegorical to the extent its threat is "deciphered." In fact, the traces of anthropomorphism are central to the connection of the mysterious human energies, kept outside the narrative, and the inscrutability of nature, causing the symbol of the oak later to contract toward a more allegorical function of distinct singular menace in its implication of human agency distorted by nature into irrational action. As this occurs, technology as an extension of human energy also plays a part, thrust by humanity up against the frontier of known and unknown in the environment as part of a rational force, and invariably shattered in consequence, as the carriage is against the protruding oak, causing the isolation of Constantia Davis and enabling her murder.

Importantly, again, the sequence of this action is begun by evidence of a distrust and constriction of the creative impulse behind the narrative whose purported connections to the act of murder emerge as a force of termination. After being trailed by the mysterious and silent figure through the woods—as opposed to the traveller's description of Nick Handyside, who describes the "idiot's" tendency to "howl" and cry—the Davis's are startled by an *inarticulate* scream "rendered more awful by the profound stillness that preceded and followed" it, which stampedes the horse and carriage from which they had alighted:

> The monster had shown some skill in the choice of a spot suitable for his design. Neighbouring precipices, and a thick umbrage of oaks, on either side contributed to prolong and heighten his terrible notes.
> ...This accident happened at about a hundred yards from the *oak*, against which so many cautions had been given. It was not possible, at any time, without considerable caution, to avoid it. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that, in a few seconds, the carriage was shocked against the trunk, overturned, and dashed into a thousand fragments.
> ...In a few minutes they arrived at the oak. The chaise appeared to have been dashed against a knotty projecture of the trunk, which was large enough for a person to be conveniently seated on it. Here again they paused (S, pp.21–22, text italics).

As the culmination of the story nears, the narrative's temporal focus appropriately tightens, and correspondingly the characters' temporal status begins more strikingly to merge with the intense foreboding that each character accumulates as the narrative follows its course. The notion of "design" thus is reinforced, linked definitively to the oak both as the spatial and temporal representation of the point where nature, humanity and irrational force meet. Indeed, up to this point the figure in the woods is referred to only with mild apprehension, a reflection of harmlessness undermined only by the insistence present in the narrative that this figure represents a departure from rationality, where "his talents, differently applied, would have excited rational admiration" (S, p.19). But once the denouement approaches, the vocabulary changes,

indicating a polarization of perception as the figure is referred to successively as a "monster" (from the description of Nick Handyside), a "spectre" (after the scream), and then at the point of destruction, a "demoniac" (S, pp.19, 21, 22, 23). And as superstition crowds in to suggest cause, the oak becomes the scene of instantaneity, a frozen temporality where opposed forces of existence meet head on and fuse the anxieties of those witnesses able to recount the moment into fear. The narrative isolates Mr Davis's thoughts as he is separated from his daughter, musing on:

> the impropriety of leaving a woman, single and unarmed, to the machinations of this demoniac. He had scarcely parted with her when these reflections occurred to him. His resolution was changed. He turned back with the intention of immediately seeking her. At the same moment, he saw the flash and heard the discharge of a pistol. The light proceeded from the foot of the oak (S, p.23).

Crucially, also, the scene is attended by a collective loss of reason where "design" takes over: Mr Davis's "imagination" becomes his sole mental refuge, leading to "the confusion of his thoughts, hindering him from tracing" Constantia's head wound, and divesting him "of all presence of mind." Similarly, Constantia is described as being "senseless" in a vacuum created by the fact that "the author of [t]his calamity had vanished" (S, p.23). Such a vacuum is quickly filled by appropriate forces of social order which include the physician as well as "most of his family...[and] his people" (S, p.23), so that where the Davis family, their servant and technology are sundered order may be re-emplaced, and action removed from the wilderness to habitation.

But such affirmation has no resonance and offers no hope, and as was stated before with regard to much of Brown's fiction, the final tone is one of silenced acknowledgement and resignation, an acceptance of the limitations of system as all that balanced thought may rely on, countered by the devastating evidence that unknown or uncontrollable energies exist in which human complicity, either volitional

or otherwise, is certain. The reinforcement of the programmes of knowledge endorsed by the hegemony, and broken in the face of such energy, reimpose themselves in the classic narrative form of *paranoia*, revenge, tracing causalities and apportioning and exacting blame. Althorpe's narrative action in this sense is to detect himself, building on Puritan senses of the enemy within, and historicizing the social line of control at the point where confession holds sway in secular necessities. This is where the individual, according to Foucault, becomes more and more the subject of self–regulation, culminating in the nineteenth century's intensification of scientific detection strategies, and by involvement and extension, psychoanalysis.

Brown, of course, had already detected the damage inevitable in such politically and culturally insistent strategies, and in the context of this study Leslie Fiedler's comment "that over his whole frantic, doomed career, the blight of melancholy presides" is both etymologically and biographically apposite.[102] Such knowledge is warily present in the revelatory discourse of another of Brown's somnambulists, Edgar Huntly's Clithero Edny:

> Death is but a shifting of the scene, and the endless progress of eternity, which, to the good, is merely the perfection of felicity, is, to the wicked, an accumulation of woe. The self–destroyer is his own enemy: this has ever been my opinion. (EH, 87)

Alongside the truth in such profound and obvious pessimism, of course, remains the creative surge available in melancholy, whether American or individual, if only it can be given a trajectory out of paranoid enclosures. A significant part of Charles Brockden Brown's achievement is to create fiction which gives extraordinary scope for the reader's inferential processes, demonstrating paranoid potentials *and* the

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[102]Leslie Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (1960; London 1970), p.137.

opportunities for creative engagement in narratives which avoid the imprisoning either/or equations which hamper his characters.

CHAPTER THREE

paranoia
A History of Discourses: 1820–present

1. The Nineteenth–Century

The term *paranoia* continued to appear in medical dictionaries and lexicons throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, continuing its links to delirium. The development of interest by psychologists such as the American Thomas Upham in a condition termed monomania began the century's refinement of discourses towards a pattern of meaning in America and Europe which would link *paranoia* to a more specific concept of mental behaviour. Upham's Elements of Mental Philosophy (1831) became an important systematization of the Scottish Common Sense philosophy which dominated American thinking in the early part of the nineteenth–century, and in it he refined notions of mental process into two actions: the "Intellectual" and "Sentient." In enlarging on the separate "elements" of mental process Upham undertook an evaluation of mental disorders, determining that monomania was a condition where:

> the alienation of reasoning is not so extensive but exists chiefly in relation to certain subjects, in respect to which the belief is affected. When the train of reasoning leads the person within the range of these particular subjects, whatever they are, we at once discover that the intellect is disordered.[1]

In 1838 Jean Esquirol (1772–1840) published Des Maladies Mentales[2] in

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[1]Thomas Upham, Elements of Mental Philosophy (1831; rpt New York 1848), Volume One, p.440. Cited in Allan Gardner Smith, The Analysis of Motives: Early American Psychology and Fiction (Amsterdam 1980), p.139.

[2]Jean Esquirol, Des Maladies Mentales considérées sous les rapports médicale, hygiénique et médico–légale (Paris 1838). Translated by E.K.Hunt as Mental Maladies: A Treatise on Insanity (Philadelphia 1845).

which he devoted considerable analysis to forms of monomania:

> By this term...Esquirol, its originator, designated that form of insanity in which, while the memory, the conceptions, and judgements generally are not destroyed, and no pronounced emotional disturbance exists, yet the patient is controlled by some expansive delusion or ambitious project.[3]

Esquirol describes three main types of monomania, with many sub-groupings. These types are intellectual, affective, and instinctive. The "monomanie intellectuelle" is closest to modern conceptions of *paranoia*, where:

> The patients start from a false principle, which they follow logically without deviation, and from which they derive legitimate consequences which (in their turn) modify their affects and acts of volition; outside this partial delusion, they feel, reason and act as everybody else.[4]

In fact, Esquirol's theories regarding monomania were known in Europe before the publication of Des Maladies Mentales, and as the earlier Cyclopedia of Practical Medicine indicates, citing Esquirol as responsible, the term largely supplanted the age-old use of melancholia within medicine and psychiatry:

> The term monomania, meaning madness affecting one train of thought, or involving only a single morbid impression, was on these considerations substituted, and has generally been adopted of late times instead of melancholia.[5]

The transitions for *paranoia* tangible in the work of Upham and Esquirol were not only significant in nosological terms, for the period in which they attempted their definitions and annexations of mental conditions saw an intensity in the relations between law and the mental sciences. These drives for the security of fixed

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[3]E. C. Spiztka, Insanity, its Classification, Diagnosis and Treatment; a Manual for Students and Practitioners of Medicine (New York 1883), p.287.

[4]Jean Esquirol, Mental Maladies: A Treatise on Insanity, translated by E.K.Hunt (Philadelphia 1845), Volume One, p.332.

[5]ed. Forbes, Tweedie & Connolly, Cyclopedia of Practical Medicine (London 1833), Volume Two, p.835.

identification of mental conditions provoked crucial upheavals in the use of law as psychiatrists and psychologists assumed and sought power within their culture and societies. The application of evidence by "experts" in the mental sciences has a long history but has never been more fraught than in the mid-nineteenth-century when, as David Brion Davis suggests, law in European and American states confronted the issue of total and partial insanity, and the responsibilities of criminals within those mental conditions:

> As psychiatry moved toward the conception of a unified personality...the law searched for some area in the mind of the paranoid, the schizophrenic, and the psychopath which remained inviolate and capable of bearing the burden of normal guilt. The ambiguous and fluctuating states of legal insanity by the 1840s necessitated some clear and definite state of authority, when French and English psychiatry threatened to undermine the basic principles of criminal jurisprudence.[6]

Although Davis's terms do not entirely match the psychiatric language of the 1840s, his sense of the shifts of power in these contexts is acute, and relevant in any discursive tracing of *paranoia* where suspicion, anxiety and the uses of guilt emerge as responses and tools for manipulation in the formation of social and political power.

To all intents and purposes the transition of *paranoia* from a broad-based psychiatric concept of delirium to one of particular clinical reference to a set of symptoms occurred in the sixty years following 1840. The essential process of refining this set of symptoms into a working clinical concept occurred in Germany. In 1845 Wilhelm Griesinger published Die Pathologie und Therapie der psychischen Krankheiten in which he used the term "Partielle Verrücktheit"[7] to describe incurable

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[6]David Brion Davis, Homicide in American Fiction 1798-1860 (Ithaca 1957), p.66.

[7]The literal meaning of *verrücktheit* in German comes from *verrücken*, to shift or move, and *theit*, thought, an etymological construction almost identical to the Greek παράνοια.

mental illness with attendant delusions of persecution or grandeur. His points of reference were two case studies of his own which had developed these delusional ideas secondarily to mania and melancholia, and he went on to determine such aberrational tendencies as part of a group which he called "Mental Weaknesses"; tendencies he saw making up the mass of mental illnesses exhibited by institutionalized patients.

By 1852, Ernest Lasègue was able to refer in his Études Médicales to the German psychiatric explorations in this area, stating in a section of his book entitled "Délire des Persécutions" that the "partielle verrücktheit" of contemporary German psychiatry referred to delusions of persecution, whilst in 1860 Benedict Morel added to psychiatric understanding of the dynamics of "monomania" in his Traite des maladies mentales by identifying the systematized character of the patient's delusions. Consequently, Morel coined his own term for monomania, "Manie systematisée."

From 1860 onwards a flood of publications and periodicals emanated from the German psychiatric scene, fashioning the clinical dimensions of an incurable mental aberration which exhibited delusions of persecution or grandeur of a systematized nature, alongside traits of suspicion and anxiety. Karl L. Kahlbaum (1828–1899) published his nosological statement in 1863, Die Gruppirung der Psychischen Krankheiten, in which a system of classification was elaborated under the stringent observation of phenomena, pathology, causation, course and outcome. Following Griesinger's lead, he asserted the incurable nature of the "Partielle Verrücktheit" condition, stating his belief that the condition was essentially an affectation of the intellect, rather than having any emotional or physiological causality. In this act, Kahlbaum confirmed the growing psychiatric opinion that *paranoia* deserved an

autonomous position as a mental condition rather than being part of a larger aberrational process. In 1865 Snell suggested, in line with Esquirol's conclusions, that the paranoid condition should be named "Primäre Monomanie," but two years later redefined his position, outlining the systematized and constructed nature of the delusions and affirming the German term "Primäre Verrücktheit."[8] Sander located what he believed to be an hereditary nature of the paranoid condition where the intellectual processes remained fundamentally intact in 1868,[9] whilst some ten years later, Carl Westphal was able to draw the conclusions of the past thirty years into the assertion that "Verrücktheit" was an independent primary psychosis, essentially an affection of the intellect, and never secondary to melancholia.[10]

According to Aubrey Lewis, the crucial shift in terminology occurred in the following years:

> Mendel and Werner had a considerable share in getting "paranoia" more widely used than the synonym *Verrücktheit*. Mendel had advocated the exclusive use of "paranoia" in 1880, Werner took the same standpoint in 1891, and *Verrücktheit*, though it did not entirely fall out of currency, was regarded generally as an old-fashioned, ambiguous term.[11]

What ensured that these suggestions were taken up by the psychiatry of the time, however, was the inclusion of the term in the sequence of influential publications

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[8]L. Snell, 'Monomanie als Primäre Form der Seelenstörung' in Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie, 22, 1865, pp.368-381.

[9]W. Sander, 'Uber eine spezielle Form der primären Verrücktheit' in Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten, vereinigt mit Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie, 1, 1868, pp.387-419.

[10]Carl Westphal, 'Uber die Verrücktheit' in Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie, 34, 1878, pp.252-257.

[11]Aubrey Lewis, 'Paranoia and paranoid: a historical perspective' in Psychological Medicine, p.4. Ernest Mendel contributed an entry 'Paranoia' to Real-Encyclopädie, ed. A. Eulenberg, (Vienna 1880), and C. Werner published Die Paranoia (Stuttgart 1891).

through the last decades of the nineteenth century which effectively endorsed psychiatry, and then created psychoanalysis, as valid areas of human knowledge, with the scientific, cultural and academic centralizations of opinion which accompany such endorsement. *Paranoia* was no different from several other terms at this time in its intersection with and adaption to a prescribed condition and set of empirically determined symptoms organized according to the emergence of a scientific doxa. Minor diagnostic differences still remained, obviously, and the identification of the basic mechanisms regarded today as the underlying structure of *paranoia* had yet to be "discovered": this "discovery" would occur as *paranoia* came of age as the twentieth century began.

The first of these publications was Richard von Krafft-Ebing's Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie. The text went through successive editions and revisions, and was translated into English in Philadelphia in 1904. In it, Krafft-Ebing (1840-1902) applies the term *paranoia* to:

> ...a chronic mental disease occurring exclusively in tainted individuals, frequently developing out of constitutional neuroses, the principal symptoms of which are delusions...
> ...and, in contrast with the delusions of primary hallucinatory insanity, are, from the beginning, systematized, methodic, and combined with the process of judgement, constituting a formal delusional structure. This capability of combining and reasoning activity, in contrast with the psychic processes in primary hallucinatory insanity, is possible owing to the relative freedom from damage of the intellect, at least on its formal side (judgement); so that on superficial observation one is struck by the clearness and logic of such patients (monomania).
>
> Notwithstanding the apparent lucidity of consciousness, this is, however, disturbed in a peculiar way, in that, in spite of the absence of emotion, in spite of the clearness of apperception, the patient cannot correct his imagination, hallucinations, etc., and rather – devoid of the power of criticism – accepts them as facts. Thus his judgements are necessarily based upon false premises, and the creation of delusional conceptions is the necessary result, the foundation and keystone of which, notwithstanding the correctness of the logical creation, are fictions...

> I have never seen paranoia in untainted persons. The taint, in the vast majority of cases, has been hereditary.[12]

Krafft–Ebing's concentration on the dysfunction of reason in paranoid consciousness, and his suggestion of an hereditary origin for the condition, are the striking elements in his analysis. In the former, the identifications made by Kant and Cox are compressed into the highly rationalized discourse which marks the psychiatric discourse of the period, proceeding mechanically to its conclusion and seemingly unaware that its location of unreason operates precisely within the parameters of "clearness and logic" and "process of judgement" connected to the aberration. Linked to this is the latter drive toward an origin of the condition, a manifestation of the nineteenth century obsession with source in the effort to control which found its apotheosis in some extrapolations from Darwinian theory. As science affirmed the heredity of humanity, so psychiatry could enhance its use of a means of tracing aberration, for which purpose rationality provided a suitably plastic medium. In the "combination" of these drives, the analyst need only locate his perception of "taint" and pursue it through a system of traces. The point is not that Krafft–Ebing's analysis is diagnostically wrong–headed, but that it fails to identify how close it comes itself to *paranoia* in its uses of reason, where "judgement" is all that separates the analyst's premise from those determined to be "false premises."

In nosological terms, Krafft–Ebing outlines two forms of the *paranoia* within which to articulate the progressions and developments of the condition. "Original Paranoia" concerns cases beginning before or during puberty, developing the idea of

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[12]Richard von Krafft–Ebing, Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie auf klinische Grundlage für practische Ärzte und Studirende (Stuttgart 1879); translated by C. G. Chaddock as Text–book of insanity, based on clinical observations for practitioners and students of medicine (Philadelphia 1904), pp.368–371.

an "hereditary taint." "Late (Acquired) Paranoia" concentrates on cases beginning after puberty, with two sub-sections: "persecutory paranoia" (with its own subsidiaries of paranoia sexualis and querulous paranoia [which involves mania for litigation]); and "expansive paranoia" (involving delusions of grandeur, with subsidiaries of inventive, or reformatory paranoia, religious paranoia, and erotic paranoia).

In the same year Krafft-Ebing's Lehrbuch der Psychiatrie first appeared, Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926) published the first in his ongoing series of the Psychiatrie: ein kurzes Lehrbuch für Studirende und Aerzte, within which appeared what remains today a yardstick definition of *paranoia*:

> [Paranoia is] the insidious development of a permanent unshakeable delusional system from inner causes in which the clarity and order of thinking, willing, and action are completely preserved...
> [Delusion] effects a deep seated change of the total outlook on life, and a derangement of standpoint towards the surrounding world...
> Every delusional idea is a representation falsified by the disease...[they] are mistakes aroused pathologically, which are inaccessible to rectification by rational means.[13]

Kraepelin's definition went through several revisions in the successive editions of his Lehrbuch as he sought to isolate an essential condition of *paranoia*. This drive resulted in the consensus-forming opinion that *paranoia* in its "true" form was incurable, and the assertion that "true" *paranoia* was an extremely rare condition in its pure form as differentiated within the accumulated symptoms drawn from the concepts of monomania and "verrücktheit." In the initial editions, Kraepelin adhered closely to the symptomatic and causal descriptions of paranoia given by Kahlbaum and others in German psychiatry, but by 1896 he began to view paranoia as closely

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[13]Emil Kraepelin, Psychiatrie: ein kurzes Lehrbuch für Studirende und Aerzte (Leipzig 1883-1913); translated by A. Ross Diefendorf as Clinical Psychiatry: a text-book for students and physicians (New York 1907), p.238.

linked to another aberrational construct, "dementia praecox." This was a term first suggested by the French psychiatrist, Benedict Morel, in his 1860 Traite des maladies mentales, to organize various forms of dementia. Kraepelin's use of the term occurs more specifically with regard to a condition which today would be termed schizophrenia. In the 1896 Lehrbuch, Kraepelin grouped "dementia paranoides" with "dementia praecox" and "catatonia," as three distinct degenerative diseases or "Verblödungsprozesse." *Paranoia* itself, as a pure condition, remained distinct, differentiated by the non-impairment of intellectual processes.

In the 1899 Lehrbuch, Kraepelin went further, and combined "dementia paranoides," "dementia praecox" and "catatonia" as a single disease, "Dementia Praecox," whilst maintaining *paranoia* as a separate and extremely rare condition in its pure non-degenerating form. The problem became the presence of particular symptoms in both "Dementia Praecox" and his "pure" paranoia to the point where, in 1912, he published a paper entitled "Uber Paranoide Erkrankungen,"[14] which suggested that paranoia no longer be used as a psychiatric term in view of its complex and different use over the preceding decades, and its confusing similarities to "Dementia Praecox." Kraepelin suggested further that the term "paraphrenia" be used to describe a paranoid condition which later develops the degenerations associated with "Dementia Praecox," whilst any use of the term *paranoia* should be limited to delimiting a psychogenic disorder alongside other hysterias. Thus, the qualities of *paranoia* entered the ambiguous territory demarcating psychosis and neurosis. In its non-degenerating form and as a psychogenic disorder (relating to an illness which has

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[14]Emil Kraepelin, 'Uber Paranoide Erkrankungen' in Zentralblatt für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie, No. 11, 1912, pp.617-638.

no obvious organic basis), *paranoia* remained within the bounds of the recently formulated concept of neurosis, whereas its fixed delusional system and incurability placed it as a psychosis.

This tension between psychosis and neurosis in the diagnosis of *paranoia* remains today, as evidenced in Paranoia: A Study in Diagnosis.[15] The text is devoted to analysing what the authors determine the "paradoxes" of paranoia, the movements between psychosis and neurosis being just one of these. In tracing the different interpretive facilities of psychosis and neurosis, particularly the more recent "dismissals" of the demarcation by Thomas Szasz and R. D. Laing, they conclude by asserting paranoia's essential paradox, which they see as the condition's definition through psychiatric discourse but that discourse's inability to securely locate the condition's proposed aberration.

Kraepelin's project, therefore, marks another discursive end and beginning in a history of *paranoia*. His definition reappears throughout the twentieth century as a formed basis to any discussion of the condition, as does the assumption that *paranoia* is invariably unresponsive to the therapeutic or curative techniques of psychiatry. Equally, Kraepelin's consciously articulated doubts as to its specific dimensions have resulted in a debate which continues today. In recalling the definition quoted from the Lehrbuch, a brief semantic analysis, as with the notions put forward by Krafft-Ebing, highlights the emergence of an urge for diagnostic certainty based prominently on words and phrases whose meaning conveys a rational intensity in proximity to the location of unreason. Examples such as "insidious," "representation falsified," and an

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[15]Yehuda Fried and Joseph Agassi, Paranoia: A Study in Diagnosis (London 1976). Fried is a psychiatrist, and Agassi a philosopher.

"inaccessab[ility] to rectification" reoccur in Lectures XV and XVI of Kraepelin's Einführung in die psychiatrische Klinik:

> in paranoia...the real root of the malady lies in a morbid predisposition, and that we have to deal with a manifestation of degeneration. The insidious development of the disease, its fundamental incurability, and the insignificance of visible disturbances would perhaps also be in favour of this view.[16]

Historically, there is no doubt of Emil Kraepelin's commitment to furthering human knowledge of mental disease and the reduction of human suffering, and that those suffering unmistakably from paranoid psychoses need aid for themselves and to prevent them harming others. At the same time, it is evident that textually and theoretically, at least, his efforts remain encapsulated in a system of discourses aligned within a science of control of the mind and body of those identified as requiring control. As has been stressed before, the discourses dealing with *paranoia* are fundamentally no different from those involved in the analysis of other mental conditions, but again it is striking that the focus on the aberrant elements contains within itself a marked fear of the irrational and invisible, which in turn provides impetus for the rational closure of definition. Contemporarily, the controversy surrounding the writings of Lautréamont had revealed that morbidity inevitably generates suspicion in the mysteriousness of its energies produced contrary to the life-force; the fact that they may be "pre-disposed," or originate beyond the range of detection, increases the perception of their intensity, and in a movement that seems timeless, the analysis is once again that used in the power-plays of Hamlet. Once again it is essential to appreciate within the definition of *paranoia* regarded today as

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[16]Emil Kraepelin, Einführung in die psychiatrische Klinik (Leipzig 1902); translated by Thomas Johnstone as Lectures on Clinical Psychiatry (London 1904), p.152.

formative a regulatory action which may itself be called paranoid.

To conclude this section it can be seen that the conjunction of psychiatric meanings in the discourses dealing with *paranoia* at this time also demonstrates, if it were ever needed, the profound interaction between the sanctioned meanings and arrangements of those discourses used within science, and those employed in the wider framework of culture. Whilst the French psychiatrist Séglas, who worked in the Salpêtrière with Charcot and Falret, felt able in 1887 to publish an article entitled "La Paranoïa, Historique et Critique,"[17] (something of a terminological coming of age), so the 1889 Ninth Edition of Encyclopedia Britannica included an entry, "Paranoia," and the 1890 edition of Webster's Dictionary did likewise for the first time, although its definition—"Mental Derangement, insanity"—was the somewhat dated. The movement into "trivial use" might be said to have occurred when the New York Tribune, December 1st, 1891, believed its readers capable of understanding what was meant when a column stated, "I should designate his troubles as paranoia."[18]

2. Freud and *paranoia*

A culmination of this scientific and cultural recognition of *paranoia* occurred almost immediately afterwards when, in the process of elaborating his theories of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud identified key elements of the condition. Freud's theory of *paranoia*, like Kraepelin's definition, remains today at the core of scientific

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[17]J. Séglas, 'La Paranoïa, Historique et Critique' in Archives Internationales de Neurologie, 13, 1887. Séglas's article was translated and reprinted as "Paranoia" in the Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases (New York 1888).

[18]One of the citations of historical use under the entry 'Paranoia' in the Oxford English Dictionary.

and cultural perception, though in the latter case and "trivial" use, Freud's statement that *paranoia* retains an essential homosexual component continues to be suppressed. Such an attitude, in itself a form of anxiety about supposed deviancy, provides an appropriate reflection of the underlying theme within the scope of Freud's analyses: that *paranoia* occurs within and emerges from the social and instinctual perceptions of power and empowerment. This is, of course, a simplification, but it needs to be made from the outset to avoid the tendency to lose a comprehensive picture in the details of analysis. Furthermore, it can be argued that other forms of neurosis and mental illness conform to this broad diagnosis, but it will be asserted here that there is a specific relation between *paranoia* and power, the identification of which first clearly emerged in Freud's work.

It is also important to note the extraordinary elements in Freud's writing and practice which fundamentally shifted the perspectives held about the patient or analysand, and beyond that, about the individual, as the locus of a more subtle and penetrating accumulation of socio-political forces. Michel Foucault articulates the tensions of this development when he states:

> ...nineteenth-century psychiatry really converges on Freud, the first man to accept in all its seriousness the reality of the physician-patient couple, the first to consent not to look away nor to investigate elsewhere, the first not to attempt to hide it in a psychiatric theory that more or less harmonized with the rest of medical knowledge... But on the other hand he exploited the structure that enveloped the medical personage; he amplified its thaumaturgical virtues, preparing for its omnipotence a quasi-divine status... He transformed this into an absolute Observation, a pure and circumspect Silence, a Judge who punishes and rewards in a judgement that does not even condescend to language; he made it the Mirror in which madness, in an almost motionless movement, clings to and casts off itself.[19]

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[19]Michel Foucault, Madness and Civilization, translated by Richard Howard (London 1967), pp.277-278.

The extraordinary scope of Freud's writing goes far beyond the organized response to threat which infuses the rhetoric of the psychiatric discourse examined so far, but as Foucault observes, within Freud's assured progression to a newer level of observation there exists a significant realignment of scientific control. The effect of this is to continue in a new form what was isolated before as a concern for power in the expert/patient relationship, a concern whose reactions to aberration continued a force of marginalization wherever the control of diagnosis may be exerted. Freud's elaboration of the theory of neurosis and the resultant foreshortening of the spaces between it and "normalcy" (or, in fact, the abolishing of "normalcy") obviously reduced the intensity of threat manifested in and around the notion of mental aberration, as did elements of the theory of transference in its attempt to elucidate the relationship of power between the analyst and analysand. However, at a certain level the effects and exertion of power remain irreducible, and in following Freud's contribution to the theory of *paranoia* it can be seen that the uses of power produce their own paranoid energies. A primary aspect of this occurs in Freud's development and use of the Oedipus complex, as Deleuze and Guattari have argued in Anti–Oedipus, a complex they determine in one sense as a system of controls centered on paternal and economic domination as an expression of scientific validity. Correspondingly, Foucault's phrase to describe the Freudian analyst, "a Judge who punishes and rewards in a judgement," becomes apposite here in terms of Freud's major statement on *paranoia*, the 1911 Psycho–Analytic Notes On An Autobiographical Account Of A Case Of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides), as this analysis produced as an exemplary paranoiac a man who suffered under the pedagogical judgements of his father, and the tensions he endured as a prominent

Judge within the German judiciary.

Freud's interest in *paranoia* spanned most of his life, a range exhibited in his published writings from the 1895 correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess through to some of his last writings in 1939. From this work emerge five important analyses: Drafts H and K sent to Fliess in 1895, "Analysis of a Case of Chronic Paranoia" (1896), Psycho-Analytic Notes On An Autobiographical Account Of A Case Of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) (1911), A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psycho-Analytic Theory of the Disease (1915), and Some Neurotic Mechanisms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality (1922). Their accumulation of a theory of *paranoia*, within the contexts of the rest of Freud's psychoanalytical work, produced the basic outline of *paranoia* as a psychical mechanism of defence operating during the return of repressed feelings, which facilitates the mental technique of projection to ensure that those feelings need not be consciously confronted. The projection of their force externally results in the production of delusory anxieties, suspicions and/or feelings of grandeur. In concentrating primarily on the male paranoiac, but later attempting to include female orientations, Freud identified what he believed to be a homosexual origin or catalyst of the condition, which in instinctual and social terms provoke the psychic tensions or repression setting in motion paranoid reactions. Freud also uncovered links between *paranoia* and narcissism and obsession, which centered analyses on the notion that *paranoia* was a disturbance or distortion of ego function.

An indirect Freudian contribution to the theory of *paranoia*, and one which remains largely ignored, was the extent to which the notion of paranoid obsession with causalities received its cementation in Freud's emplacement of diagnosis within a narrative pursuit of origins. This narrative priority provided its own set of paranoid

tensions according to Julia Kristeva, who, like Deleuze and Guattari, identifies the oedipalizations of Freud's theory and influence as problematic:

> This much is becoming known...after so many biographies confided on the couch: a narrative is, all in all, the most elaborate attempt, next to syntactic competence, to situate a speaking being between his desires and their prohibitions, in short, within the Oedipal triangle.[20]

The problem extends from the social and cultural senses that psychiatry, and then psychoanalysis, use their discursive powers to assume the socio-political dominance ascribed historically to religion, where theory or forms of rational disclosure may become creed. In Freud's case the exertion of power is all the more subtle and effective, endorsing and controlling the subject at the point of utterance and self-inscription, ensuring that the mediums of language and social communication exist as nets of codes from which the analyst may draw the power of diagnosis. The subject is always to be found encoded as s/he will always be a product of the essential origin, the Oedipus complex, and as such positioned at a point of theoretical and existential tension, as Kristeva notes.

A separate study would be required to follow through in detail the development of Freud's theory of *paranoia*, so the discussion will limit itself briefly to a selection of issues. In the first of the cited analyses, the 1895 Drafts H and K, Freud elaborated on his statement "that chronic paranoia in its classical form is *a pathological mode of defence*"[21] by outlining the condition in comparison to hysteria, obsessions, hallucinatory confusion and hysterical psychoses. In doing this he asserted that "[t]he

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[20]Julia Kristeva, The Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection, translated by Leon Roudiez (New York 1982), p.140.

[21]Sigmund Freud, 'Draft H' in The Origins of Psycho-Analysis (New York 1954), p.109.

determining element in paranoia is the mechanism of projection"[22] and began an exploration of the mechanism which culminated in the 1911 and 1913 studies, the Schreber case and Totem and Taboo respectively, linking projection to psychosexual repressive tensions and the broader notion of animistic and religious thought. From his earliest deliberations, however, Freud was careful to place *paranoia* in the context of a disruption of perceptual process, within which the theory of projection provided the essential link between normal causalities of thought and belief, and those distorted into paranoid functions:

> The purpose of the paranoia, therefore, was to fend off an idea that was intolerable to her ego by projecting its subject–matter into the external world.
> ...It is a question of the abuse of a psychical mechanism which is very commonly employed in normal life: the mechanism of transposition or projection. Whenever an internal change occurs, we can choose whether we shall attribute it to an internal or external cause. If something deters us from accepting an internal origin, we naturally seize upon an external one.[23]

In these senses projection became the bedrock for explanations about *paranoia* which simultaneously could include the normative functions of mental process alongside aberrant symptoms, providing a scientific resolution to the issue of *paranoia* as "an intellectual psychosis"[24]: how could an individual, as Rush and Kant seemed to ask, manifest aberration within largely normative mental capabilities?

Freud's awareness that these early remarks on projection were an outline of a process, and thus were inadequate to explain either the intricacies or origin of *paranoia* led to his re–examination of the concept in the 1911 Psycho–Analytic Notes

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[22]Freud, 'Draft K' in The Origins of Psycho–Analysis, p.153.

[23]Freud, 'Draft K,' p.111.

[24]Freud, 'Draft H,' p.109.

On An Autobiographical Account Of A Case Of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides). In the effort to use the theory of projection within the parameters of Judge Schreber's case, and in line with the observations he shared with Jung and Ferenczi about the presence of an implicit "homosexual wish"[25] in *paranoia*, Freud produced the famous dialectical progression in which:

> ...it is a remarkable fact that the familiar principal forms of paranoia can all be represented as contradictions of the single proposition: "*I* (a man) *love him* (a man)," and indeed that they exhaust all the possible ways in which such contradictions could be formulated.[26]

This first proposition, due to its 'unacceptable' nature, cannot enter the individual's conscious, and through the force of repression re-emerges negatively as, "I do not *love* him—I *hate* him." The projection completes itself in externalized delusions of persecution in the concluding proposition, which asserts "I do not *love* him—I *hate* him, because HE PERSECUTES ME."

Freud's dissatisfaction with this as a comprehensive explanation of projection as it occurs within *paranoia* emerged in the conclusions of the Schreber case, where he stated: "It was incorrect to say that the perception which was suppressed internally is projected outwards; the truth is rather...that what was abolished internally returns from without."[27] Since this formulation a number of analysts and commentators have attempted to go further. The most convincing of these have been developed from the subtext of Freud's remarks on *paranoia* in the case of Schreber and elsewhere which

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[25]Sigmund Freud, Psycho-Analytic Notes On An Autobiographical Account Of A Case Of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) (1911) in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London 1958), Volume XII, p.59.

[26]Freud, S.E.C.P.W., Vol.XII, p.63.

[27]Freud, S.E.C.P.W., Vol.XII, p.71.

stresses the condition, its mechanisms and possible origin as engaged in the interactions of the individual and power. The tempering of power as the overt element extends from Freud's concentration on sexuality—particularly on homosexuality—as manifested in his libido theory, which, to be fair, is a theory of sexual dominances in mental process, which in turn is influenced by the central framework of Freudian power, the Oedipal complex. The scope of the difference can best be explained if one considers the stress on sexuality and the Oedipal complex organizing itself as a form of religion, particularly given the phallic–paternal orientations of the theories;[28] in comparison, the analyses we will now move onto are secular in their thrust, including sexuality, but not limiting themselves to its exposition as a singular explanatory force.

Paul Ricoeur, in his Freud and Philosophy: an Essay on Interpretation, briefly discusses projection and *paranoia* in the Freudian perspectives of religion and animism, and begins by quoting from Totem and Taboo:

> "in primitive men the process of thinking is still to a great extent sexualized. This is the origin of their belief in the omnipotence of thoughts." On the other hand, what to me seems very penetrating in Freud's initial insight is his view that the first religious problematic is a problematic of omnipotence; it was only natural for a psychoanalysis of religion to look for the equivalent of this problematic in the interplay of desires.
> ...It is here that a new mechanism must be introduced, the mechanism of projection, patterned on paranoia. Freud does not give us a complete theory of projection [in the Schreber case], but rather takes it up at the point where it furnishes an economic solution to a conflict of

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[28]The best exposition of this theme, which includes critiques of Jung, Reich and D.H.Lawrence as inheritors and reinterpreters of a Freudian "faith," can be found in Philip Rieff, The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud (New York 1966). Ernest Jones remembers Freud stating to him that: "...the simplest way of learning psychoanalysis was to believe all that he (Freud) wrote was true and then, after understanding it, one could criticize it in any way one wished." Ernest Jones, The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud (London 1948), p.204.

ambivalence...[29]

Ricoeur then locates the ambivalence operating between Schreber and his father, and by transference his physician Flechsig, moving from there into the interconnections between these processes and Schreber's delusions about God, his own grandeur and passive femininity. Ricoeur's concentration on "projection in a religious theme" allows him to approach the mechanism from an acute angle, and in connecting it to Freud's elaborations on religion, animism and feelings of omnipotence in Totem and Taboo as formative actions in primitive consciousness and the unconscious, he states that "[t]he function of projection is...reconciliation."[30] This point is reached by determining Schreber's paranoid use of projection as a mechanism designed to mediate the ambivalence felt in the loss of omnipotence brought on by repressed homosexual feelings, and the consequent focus on paternal authority figures, which in this case are expressed explicitly as God–like. The reconciliation sought may emerge in a number of ways in the continuum of mental process, and in the Schreber case manifests itself in delusions of persecution by God (who supplants Flechsig), whom Schreber believes is turning him into a woman for the purposes of sexual abuse. The ambivalence occurs in the tension between the repressed desire for passivity in the face of omnipotent control, and the threat this poses to the individual's own sense of omnipotence. In a wider dimension, Ricoeur's remarks conclude that:

> Man is capable of religion as he is of neurosis, we said; let us add: he is capable of religion as he is of paranoia. This proposition—which is considerable indeed—is not so much an answer that closes as a

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[29]Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy: an Essay on Interpretation, translated by Denis Savage (New Haven 1970), pp.238–239. Ricoeur quotes from Freud, S.E.C.P.W., Vol.XIII, p.89.

[30]Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy, pp.238–239n.

question that opens.[31]

The "question that opens" is precisely about the effects of power on the mental processes of individuals, either experienced from without or asserted from within, or both, and it locates the theoretical space within which this thesis extends itself.

Two more post–Freudian treatments of *paranoia* serve to reinforce Ricoeur's conclusions. In his treatment of projection, David Shapiro concentrates on the concepts of autonomy and rigid character and argues convincingly that:

> Projective ideas are not merely "expulsions" of unconscious thoughts or feelings onto external figures but extensions of the defensive relationship with such figures. Accordingly, these ideas are determined not directly by the feelings that intensified that defensiveness but by the particular defensive concerns and anticipations that are excited.
> ...Can projection, understood in this way, be described as a defense "mechanism"? It is not, in my opinion, a satisfactory description. Projection is not a device; it is an outcome of a process, a tendency of the organism under certain conditions of increasing tension—which is to say not so much that projection relieves tension as that it forestalls an intolerable development of tension.[32]

The idea of a "tension" takes us back to Kristeva's remarks on the individual within the controls of analysis, and equally may be seen to lead back historically into the theories of anxiety neurosis, the prime example being Wilhelm Reich's concept of "character armouring." Shapiro pursues his argument in relation to the Schreber case by acknowledging the validity of Freud's diagnosis of a repressed homosexual wish as a pivotal element, but asserts that certain needs for autonomy play a similarly significant role.

Shapiro begins by moving outwards from his statement that in Freud's "analysis

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[31]Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy, pp.240–241n.

[32]David Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character (New York 1981), pp.143–145.

of the sources of behaviour there was no theory of action."[33] Like Ricoeur, he sees the ambivalence of the paranoid position as an index of the condition's organization, particularly in its dimension as a reaction to power, and he reinforces this position by a detailed analysis of the Shreber case which utilizes important background information brought to light by William G. Niederland. Niederland's research into Schreber's childhood, his father and family life confirm Freud's assumptions that Schreber's relationship with his father provided the catalyst for his *paranoia*, but it also uncovered an horrendously authoritarian upbringing performed by a fanatic in the fields of child rearing, and social and moral deportment. The father, Dr Daniel Gottlieb Schreber, published widely, and his most famous book Erziehungslehre (Educational Doctrination)[34] continued to be admired and used in Germany into the twentieth-century, especially during the political emphases of the 1930's and 40's. Daniel Paul Schreber consequently became a victim of a regime which involved rigid control of mental and physical activity, brooking no refusal or distraction, and which utilized various mechanisms to ensure that whether standing, sitting or lying, the child's posture remained correctly designated. In applying these discoveries to Schreber's Memoirs (the text used by Freud in his analysis), Niederland locates significant links between Schreber's delusional constructs and the actuality of his upbringing and domination, such as feelings of chest and head compression, which relate back to the halters and braces he was forced to wear as a child.[35] Niederland

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[33]Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character, p.11.

[34]The book's full title was Kallipaedie oder Erziehung zur Schönheit durch naturgetreue und gleichmässige Förderung normaler Körperbildung (Kallipaedie or Education to Beauty Through Natural and Symmetrical Promotion of Normal Body Growth).

[35]William G. Niederland, The Schreber Case: Psychoanalytic Profile of a Paranoid Personality (New York 1974), pp.60-61.

also details the remarkable chronological parallels of father and son: Daniel Gottlieb Schreber suffered a debilitating head injury at the age of fifty–one, and after a period of self–enforced seclusion, died aged fifty–three; his son first fell ill at the age of fifty–one, and suffered a marked deterioration two years later, during and after which he became convinced he had suffered a divine "death" and sexual reorientation, existing thereafter as a woman for the purposes of sexual abuse by God. A view of the case from these biographical perspectives, then, taken together with Freud's incisive sexual analyses, promotes an aetiology of the resultant *paranoia* which lays greater emphasis on the effects on the individual existing within an extraordinary power structure. In consequence, the argument here is not so much an effort to prioritize the effects of power over a Freudian sexual emphasis, or even to denigrate that emphasis; rather, it is an attempt to see power and sexuality in these contexts as equally involved and interlinked agencies in the production of *paranoia*. Power and sexuality act in concert; indeed, any attempt to differentiate between them as causal elements is doomed to failure.

These considerations align themselves with David Shapiro's thoughts in the conclusion of his examination of the Schreber case and its contributions to a theory of *paranoia*. He states:

> Neither the existence of unconscious homosexuality nor the revulsion against it is capable of explaining the nature of paranoid pathology; something of the opposite is true. The nature of paranoid rigidity and of the paranoid problem of autonomy is capable of explaining both a special impulse toward and a special abhorrence for "female" sexual surrender—in men, a homosexual impulse... We know, in fact, that many kinds of internal and external circumstance, apart from the intensification of homosexual impulses, are capable of intensifying, at least temporarily, the sense of vulnerability, defensiveness, and

projective distortion in already defensive, rigid characters.[36]

The stress therefore should be on what Freud called at the outset in his analyses of *paranoia* "a particular psychical disposition,"[37] and should concentrate on Shapiro's valuable, though formally tentative, distinction that *paranoia* may be "a pathology of autonomy."[38]

Two further issues provide evidence supporting this conclusion, and their continuing controversy in the debate about *paranoia* lends credence also to the perception of a discursive *paranoia* in and around the organizations of a science and culture, which continues in turn to locate specific anxieties about the dissemination of power in the social matrix. These are the presence of homosexuality in *paranoia* and the difficulties patriarchal explorations of the condition have had in identifying or including an autonomously feminine paranoid experience. In both cases Freud's work was instrumental in setting up certain theoretical preconditions which isolate an ambivalence in their consequent development. Analysts have since been forced to concentrate their energies in acknowledging the validity of Freudian concepts, whilst seeking to prove methodological and/or experiential differences. In effect, the progression becomes one of tapping the source of theoretical power before moving on in an effort to locate an autonomous analysis, something which Freud himself would have diagnosed within an oedipal dimension. The stress here, however, continues to be on broader formations of power.

Since Freud's theory, and contemporary affirmations such as the papers

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[36]Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character, pp.165–166.

[37]Freud, 'Draft H,' p.109.

[38]Shapiro, Autonomy and Rigid Character, p.167.

published by Sandor Ferenczi,[39] psychoanalysts and psychiatrists have engaged in repetitive actions to prove or disprove homosexuality as a key element in *paranoia*, whether as an origin, an aetiological energy, or a resultant sexual orientation. Kenneth Lewes has pointed out, however, that a close reading of Freud reveals that:

> The association of homosexuality with paranoia represented a real confusion. Freud meant to show that the homosexual component of mankind's universal bisexuality served as the driving force behind the paranoid delusions.
> ...The connection between homosexuality and paranoia was strengthened because of their joint origin in narcissism.[40]

The effort to resolve the "confusion" surrounding homosexuality and *paranoia* resulted in a variety of theoretical and empirical studies whose cumulative force has been to diminish the profile of homosexuality in these contexts. That it continues to linger in the theory and analysis of *paranoia* is a testament both to the enduring authority of Freudian perspectives and the continuing social tensions surrounding homosexuality.

The empirical studies carried out have varied in their results, some confirming Freud's theory and others denying the existence of a widespread causal presence of homosexuality.[41] Harold S. Zamansky's 1958 study of the problem produced the findings which remain the most popular amongst analysts and sociologists alike, essentially because they isolate homosexual tensions amongst institutionalized male

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[39]see, for instance, 'On the Part Played by Homosexuality in the Pathogenesis of Paranoia' (1912), and 'Some Clinical Observations on Paranoia and Paraphrenia' (1914), both in Sandor Ferenczi, Sex in Psycho-Analysis (Boston 1916).

[40]Kenneth Lewes, The Psychoanalytic Theory of Male Homosexuality (New York 1988), pp.60, 73. With regard to this last point, the connections between narcissism and *paranoia* indicate a preoedipal paranoid activity; more will be said on this subject when considering the work of Melanie Klein.

[41]See Robert May, 'Paranoia and Power Anxiety' in Journal of Projective Techniques, 34, 1970, pp.412-418, for an assessment of research done to determine the links between *paranoia* and homosexuality.

paranoiacs but determine that such tensions arise from the existential perspectives formed by *paranoia* rather than being in any way causal factors:

> It is suggested, therefore, that the results of the present experiment support the view of paranoia...that the person with paranoid delusions is indeed characterized by strong homosexual impulses, but that these impulses themselves serve a defensive function, that of helping to neutralize and erotize powerful hostile wishes against male figures... The homosexuality of the male paranoid appears as an intermediary process in the development of his delusions, rather than being a primary aetiological agent.[42]

Eysenck and Wilson's comment on these conclusions is succinct and to the point when they say that "the paranoid's reaction to homosexual situations can be viewed as consistent with, and a part of, his general suspiciousness and vigilance in relation to threatening stimuli."[43] The situation is one in which the anxieties produced by the male paranoiac's social position – not least his reaction to institutional control – set in motion a process of withdrawal and defence within which homosexual impulses may arise, essentially oriented around the social fears concerning homosexuality and the concentrations of power around male figures. Western cultures, at least since Ancient times, have promulgated fears about homosexuality, primarily aimed at its alleged potential for interference in reproductive processes and disruption of the social power base structures, patriarchally organized in tribal and family cells. The connections between *paranoia* and homosexuality in these terms seem clearly to be, as Freud proposed, a product of the complex sexualization of power, though, as with the theory of projection, the tendency is to seek origins in a behavioural orientation

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[42]Harold S. Zamansky, 'An investigation of the psychoanalytic theory of paranoid delusions' reprinted in ed. Hans J. Eysenck & Glenn D. Wilson, The Experimental Study of Freudian Theories (London 1973), pp.310, 312.

[43]Zamansky, 'An investigation of the psychoanalytic theory of paranoid delusions,' 314.

rather than see *paranoia* as a product of something deeper and, perhaps, asexual. Certainly, Zamansky's investigation, within its confessed limitations, places as much stress on the possibility of *paranoia* being a reaction to homosexual status in the institution and culture, as to it being involved at a deeper genetic level.

The major contribution made by Freud's study of Schreber in these respects becomes the tracing of male desires within social transmissions of power where the extremes of submission, absolute dominance and autonomy find a medium of expression in their erotic charge. Writers such as Norman Mailer, William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg present different aspects of this issue in their work, involving homosexuality in their perspectives of the Reichian theory of sexual discharge as a social and individual formation of energies determined by flows and impedances. Mailer's aggressive heterosexuality in his writing connects homosexuality (and masturbation) to an inability to fully discharge energies in cycles of being, citing the alienation of technologically advanced capitalism as a primary impedance factor.[44] Whilst there is certainly some truth in Mailer's view of the social production of individuals and the obstruction of their sexuality, his evident homophobia distorts the analysis into its own anxieties about the status of male power. Both in contrast and in comparison, William Burroughs pursues in his writing a homoerotic emphasis and misogyny, frequently evoking utopias of masculine community which provide a startling parallel to his savage critique of the organized exclusions of religion, capitalist desire and law enforcement, particularly where his homosexual "counterinsurgent forces...are homosexual because the fear and suppression of

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[44]See, for instance, Mailer's The Naked and the Dead (1948), An American Dream (1965) and The Prisoner of Sex (1971).

homosexuality is part of the militarist structure and its alliance with female dominance."[45] The exclusion of women thus extends within a *paranoia* bred from Burroughs' exposure of the power manias afflicting Western cultures in their production and control of desire, and offers a further example of the reflexive nature of anxieties about power and its investment with sexuality.

The element of misogyny highlighted in both Burroughs and Mailer leads conveniently into the obvious exclusion, or non-presence, of women in the history of *paranoia*. This action involves a broad sweep from the patriarchally selective diagnosis of patients according to their gender through to concentrations on male prerogatives in theory, spanning the history and discourse of psychiatry itself, as this analysis demonstrates. Freud's location of homosexuality as a process invariably present in *paranoia* can be seen as a culmination of the patriarchal exclusion of women from the condition, even to the extent that in his A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psycho-Analytic Theory of the Disease, he constructs an ingenious argument to explain the conformity of a case of female paranoia to the male model isolated in the Schreber case. Naomi Schor thus correctly interprets Freud's analytic action posing the questions: "can females theorize, albeit in the caricatural mode of the mad? Does the homology between male and female paranoia include the prestigious intellectual (hyper)activity associated with the male model?"[46] The answer, according to Freud, is yes, but with conditions which deny the possibility of

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[45]Eric Mottram, 'William Burroughs: Survivalist in a Manichean World' in The Final Academy (London 1984), p. 31. See, for instance, William Burroughs, Port of Saints (1973) and Cities of the Red Night (1981).

[46]Naomi Schor, 'Female Paranoia: The Case for Psychoanalytic Feminist Criticism' in Yale French Studies, 62, 1981, p.206.

affirmation, namely the conformity of female paranoiacs to a process which includes a homosexual impulse at some catalyzing moment (which Freud insists occurs in relation to the female figure of power for the female, the mother, or someone identified with the mother), and, as Schor carefully explicates, an objectification of the woman by localizing symptoms in her corporeality, thus inhibiting any diagnostic stress on mental activity.

Such conditions clearly deny women an autonomous place within the theory of *paranoia*. Not only is "female" *paranoia* subordinated to the male condition by certain masculine prerequisites, but it is also subjected to the classic imprisonment by medicine within patriarchal theory determining the female body a field of peculiar tensions and feelings insofar as they can be identified and controlled by the scope of male power. In this sense, Freud and the other theoreticians do not allow women the space to feel or experience their own *paranoia*, but rather dictate to them what that condition may be. The pervasion of this social control extends throughout culture, as Schor confirms when she comments on the designation of female predilections for jealousy as the "typical type of female paranoia." Quoting the remarks of Ruth Mack Brunswick, "Freud's favourite female disciple in his later years," Schor demonstrates how the construction of theory may assimilate the identities culturally determined for gender and reproject and reinforce them:

> I should like at this point to make a possible differentiation between two of the types of true paranoia, the jealous and the persecutory. The latter, as we have seen, is an elaborate psychosis of an essentially masculine nature, and is the commonest form of paranoia in men. The jealous form, on the other hand, is par excellence the paranoia of women...In contradiction to the philosophic, systematizing persecutory paranoia, the delusional jealousy is both feminine and rudimentary and,

as it were, closer to the normal and neurotic.[47]

The jealous woman as a cultural stereotype is thus possessed of a secure enough identity, with assured qualities, to be admitted within the framework of on-going psychoanalytic theory. Once there, if she then submits the territory of her body and a correctly aligned sexuality to analytic surveillance, and these conform and exhibit inferior symptoms to those prescribed from the male condition, she may then be admitted into the theory of *paranoia*.

Again, it is clear that the action of theory, in its systematization and accumulation of knowledge, operates as an organization of power committed to certain exclusions and apprehensions according to patriarchal anxieties. This manifestation may be termed *patriarchal paranoia*, for want of a better term to describe the tensions which have informed male/female relations in patriarchal societies throughout their existence, and which remain today as prevalent as ever. The product of this patriarchal power anxiety, through the enforcement of prescribed identities and physical coercions, has in fact been a *paranoia* distinct to femininity. In an analysis of women diagnosed as paranoid, Klein and Horowitz found that 70% of the sample identified male figures as persecutors, and that any sexual content to delusion tended toward heterosexual attack or domination, in opposition to Freudian theory's requirement of homosexual orientation.[48] The point is not lost on Phyllis Chesler, whose book Women and Madness demonstrates through statistical evidence drawn from psychiatric institutions, case studies, and analysis of the pressures exerted upon women by the

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[47]Ruth Mack Brunswick, 'The Analysis of a Case of Paranoia (Delusion of Jealousy)' (1929), quoted in Schor, Yale French Studies, p.207.

[48]H. Klein and W. Horowitz, 'Psychosexual Factors in the Paranoid Phenomena' in American Journal of Psychiatry, 105, 1949, pp.697-701.

major psychiatric and psychoanalytic theoreticians, how *paranoia* (as one of several mental disturbances with a similar status) affects and afflicts women, and in specific forms relating to their gender. In her remark that "[t]he problems of being both black and female in a racist and sexist society are staggering, the permutations of violence, self-destructiveness, and paranoia endless," Chesler alludes to the tensions experienced by those transfixed by the weight and manipulations of social power.[49] More recently, Deborah Tannen has researched the linguistic bases of gender difference, and uncovered the strikingly different attitudes towards social empowerment embodied in feminine and masculine communication. In Tannen's perspective:

> Women tend to use language to create intimacy and connection, and men use language to preserve their independence and negotiate their status. The question overriding women's interactions is, "Do you love me?" or, if it's not a close relationship, "Do you like me?"
>
> And the question in men's minds is, "Are you trying to dominate me?"[50]

Given the different priorities evident at such a basic social level it is hardly surprising gender consciousness has always been an arena filled with the potential of *paranoia*, manifested on both sides in anxieties of threat and counter-threat to vulnerability and authority. The production of *paranoia* both by those wielding power and those subject to its enforcement is mutual, grounded in the suspicions and fears which both feel bound to utilize to make sense of their existential experience.

It is this urge to make sense, and primarily make sense of the processes of domination, which culminate in the theory of *paranoia* as Freud left it. That the

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[49]Phyllis Chesler, Women and Madness (New York 1973), p.224.

[50]Deborah Tannen, interviewed in City Paper (Washington, D.C.), November 9, 1990, p.20. See also her book, You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation (New York 1990).

systems set up by theory (and, by extension, of practice) might stimulate *paranoia* are consistently recognized within his writing, but the application of this fact to the effects of his theoretical authority seem ultimately to be displaced to the issue of transference, where the debate is confined within narrow limits which do not threaten the idea of analytic dominance. The consequence of this is an organization of knowledge used by and taken on from Freud whose effect has been to encourage as much *paranoia* as it has identified and assisted.

In concluding this section, two things remain to be said to reinforce the importance of Freud to a history of *paranoia* in what has been the briefest of analyses, and one which has necessarily had to concentrate on only one element of Freud's pioneering work with regard to *paranoia*. As Philip Rieff has pointed out, a fundamental difference between Freud and his forebears was Freud's concentration on locating meaning in the arrangement of symptoms, rather than simply following the empirical evidence of an illness.[51] It is this technique—in effect, the retracing of a narrative and a reconstruction (and thence relaunching) of a life—which must always be borne in mind when approaching the notion that the discourses of psychiatry and psychoanalysis may produce *paranoia* in their coercions. Freud gave Western knowledge, those who organize its dissemination within cultures, and the individuals inside them, the possibility of interpreting and penetrating existential circumstance to a deeper, previously hidden level. In doing this it is fair to say that he raised the intensity of anxieties experienced between the sources of power in culture and those dominated, in that greater scope was given to the effort to trace causalities as they operated on an individual level, which reflected, in turn, the exertion of specific and

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[51]Philip Rieff, Freud: The Mind of the Moralist (New York 1961), pp.42–43.

general forces. In the contexts of Freud's era, the movement from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries, this essentially informs Daniel Bell's statement that "[t]he real problem of modernity is the problem of belief,"[52] taking the debate on from the tensions articulated by Hamlet, through the Enlightenment, to a newer form of self-perception. Put in another way, Freud permitted both the analyst and the patient to view their positions inside the narratives determining their lives, and refer outwards from that point with sets of self-explanatory causalities whose truth was essentially secular and based on a functional rationality.

Finally, the issue of power, and specifically, power at its basic interpersonal level as a medium in which *paranoia* is pervasive, according to Freud, receives a curious endorsement in the example given by Hendrik Hertzberg and David McClelland of institutionalized paranoid behaviour. The two writers suggest that the tensions suffered by paranoids contribute meaningfully to the sociopolitical organization of institutional life, where *paranoia* provides the credentials for assuming power within any psychiatric patient collective. They cite a psychiatrist's recollection of an incident at a mental hospital where a:

> gas main had broken, and the poisonous fumes were seeping into the wards. It was vital that the hospital be evacuated, and the staff was undermanned. The expected chaos and panic did not materialize, however, because a group of paranoid schizophrenics, once released from their cells, immediately took charge of the evacuation, organized it, and carried it out quickly and efficiently. These paranoids saw nothing unusual in the fact that the hospital was about to be engulfed by an invisible, deadly, malevolent force.[53]

Equally, B. M. Rutherford's studies in psychopathology and political influence in

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[52]Daniel Bell, The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism (New York 1976), p.28.

[53]Hendrik Hertzberg & David C. K. McClelland, 'Paranoia' in Harper's Magazine, June 1974, p.59.

mental institutions have found that paranoid characteristics are positively associated with political influence and activity,[54] as earlier and contemporary work by Harold Lasswell and Richard Hofstadter has suggested in sociopolitical contexts.[55] The aim of paranoid consciousness is to continuously map out and prepare for any threat, and as such to monitor uninterruptedly the status of power in a given situation in order to safeguard what is perceived to be one's autonomy. This intensity of power perception consequently not only opens up the potential for delusion and causes rigidity of belief and action, but also in some circumstances allows the paranoid to identify and assume control of the mediums of political power. The input of *paranoia* to political process is evident in any view of history—Hitler and Stalin come to mind as recent examples—and it is this political stress which marks the discourses of *paranoia*, notwithstanding the homosexual complications, in and after Freud's creation of psychoanalysis. With its continuing masculine stress, the history of *paranoia* went on to involve itself in the twentieth century's dreams and fears about absolute totalitarian power, and these final quotations are representative of the current dimension of *paranoia* in psychiatric and psychoanalytic discourse towards which this history is headed:

> paranoia in males is the outcome of an intense conflict over power: on the one hand a wish to rectify a sensed inadequacy by deriving strength from another, and on the other hand a fear of being destroyed by the powerful other.[56]

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[54]B. M. Rutherford, 'Psychopathology, Decision Making and Political Involvement' in Journal of Conflict Resolution, 10, 1966, pp.387–407.

[55]See Harold D. Lasswell, Psychopathology and Politics (1930; rpt. Chicago 1977) and Power and Personality (New York 1948); and Richard Hofstadter, 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics' in The Paranoid Style in American Politics (New York 1965).

[56]H. Wolowitz, 'Attraction and aversion to power: a psychoanalytic conflict theory of homosexuality in male paranoids' in Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 70, 1965, p.370.

> The paranoid male is gripped by an ever-expanding metaphor of power and masculinity which blots out all other aspects of human relation and makes him able to see things only in terms of who's on top and who's doing what to whom.[57]

3. The Early Twentieth Century

Apart from Freud, the twentieth century has seen a number of other important contributions to the theory of *paranoia*, as well as its extension into wider cultural use. The 1903 edition of The New International Encyclopedia, published in New York City, recorded under the entry "Paranoia" that psychiatry laid great stress on the organic and physiological nature of the disease, and affirmed that those afflicted, which it terms "cranks...are able to carry on a business or practice a profession."[58] The intensity of the debate within psychiatric discourse as to an agreed identity for the condition made it more visible for those eager to share the new psychoanalytic and psychiatric knowledge with a wider audience, and thus it appeared in the rash of cultural and historical analyses which characterized the first decades of the century. Two examples of this early diagnostic exertion focused on Jesus Christ, and reveal the rapid and blanket transfer of concepts between science and culture in their initial interactions. Using the gospels, the commentators determined that:

> In short, the nature of the hallucinations of Jesus, as they are described...permits us to conclude that the founder of the Christian religion was afflicted with religious paranoia.[59]

> Everything that we know about (Jesus Christ) conforms so perfectly to the clinical picture of paranoia that it is hardly conceivable that people

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[57]May, 'Paranoia and power anxiety,' p.417.

[58]The New International Encyclopedia (New York 1903), Vol.XIII, p.690.

[59]Charles Binet-Sanglé, La Folie de Jèsus (1910), cited in Thomas Szaz, The Manufacture of Madness (New York 1970), p.311.

can even question the accuracy of the diagnosis.[60]

While such certitude characterized populist diagnosis, it was ironic that within the mental sciences themselves *paranoia* was undergoing a merging process which threatened to dissolve it as an autonomous condition. Following on from the late nineteenth century confusion with terminology, *paranoia* had emerged just prior to the related condition of schizophrenia, and it was the hardening and inclusivity of schizophrenia as a new concept in the first decades of the twentieth century that seemed likely to absorb its discursive relative. This action was most fully realized in the work of the Swiss psychiatrist, Eugen Bleuler (1857–1939), who provoked important reassessments of *paranoia* with his influential theory of schizophrenia. Bleuler suggested that *paranoia* was essentially similar to, if not part of, schizophrenia (or what was known before under the title "dementia praecox"). He elaborated three forms of *paranoia* with reference to Kraepelin's formulations: paranoia, a paranoid form of dementia praecox, and an intermediate condition. In Affektivität, Suggestibilität, Paranoia (1906), and the major study, Dementia Praecox, oder Gruppe der Schizophrenien (1911),[61] he outlined these forms of paranoia with specific reference to their symptomatic similarities to schizophrenia, moving finally to the point where he asserted that, owing to the extreme rarity of the "pure" paranoia of Kraepelin's classification, *paranoia* was really symptomatic of schizophrenia, particularly in terms of delusional formation.

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[60]William Hirsch, Conclusions of a Psychiatrist (1912), cited in Szaz, The Manufacture of Madness, p.311.

[61]Eugen Bleuler, Affektivität, Suggestibilität, Paranoia (Halle a. S. 1906) and Dementia Praecox, oder Gruppe der Schizophrenien (Leipzig 1911), translated by Joseph Zinkin as Dementia Praecox; or, The Group of Schizophrenias (New York 1950).

The influence of Bleuler's ideas and the expansion and importance of schizophrenia in psychiatry, in tandem with the internal dynamics given to the theory of *paranoia* by Freud, have ensured that *paranoia* and schizophrenia remain closely interrelated in psychiatric discourse. Indeed, a popular diagnosis of mental patients in the late twentieth century continues to be "paranoid–schizophrenia." *paranoia*, however, has maintained a certain independence because of the persistent fascination, first clearly articulated by Kant in 1798, for a mental condition whose distortions leave it so close to "normal" mental functioning. The translation of this fascination into cultural discourse has lent *paranoia* a sharper distinction in cultural terms than is perhaps present today in psychiatric and psychoanalytic diagnosis, where its use is frequently limited to symptomatic tendencies, blurring the notion of a separate condition. In contrast, schizophrenia remains largely applicable to immobilizing and dysfunctional conditions whose cultural use has been erroneously limited to the idea of split or multiple personality.

Since Kraepelin, Freud, and Bleuler, therefore, there has been little alteration, as far as the mental sciences are concerned, in either the dimension of *paranoia* or its academic and clinical use. The recognition at the turn of the century that paranoia was a condition involving symptoms and possible aetiological functions which manifested themselves in other mental aberrations ensured that psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have been wary of isolating *paranoia* in diagnosis, often preferring instead to see paranoid tendencies as part of a wider process. Such processes include obsessive neuroses and hysterical psychoses as well as schizophrenia. This wariness also stemmed from the increasing dissemination of the term into cultural use, creating a reflexive tightening in academic and clinical terms, as if to retain something of the

diagnostic power and mystique which psychiatric discourse attempts to appropriate for itself.

The clinical theory of *paranoia* received a fresh and intriguing perspective in the 1930's and 40's with Melanie Klein's work in child analysis. In The Psycho–Analysis of Children (1932) and a selection of other texts, Klein explored the psychological dimensions of the early months of life, concentrating on the ways in which human beings develop their mental and perceptual functions. Beginning from the moment of birth, determined as the formative moment of psychological trauma for all humans, she then went on to outline a series of phases which she saw the infant moving through in terms of mental development up to and including its involvement in the sexual complexities of the Oedipus Complex. For Klein the trauma of birth and separation from security and nourishment confronts the infant with its first experience of externality which inevitably produces anxiety. In extremely simplified terms, the ways thereafter in which the infant develops its mental functions in response to this anxiety determines its future mental health and perceptual abilities.

The first phase of mental development thus becomes one in which the infant must construct psychic defences aimed at mediating a potentially overwhelming anxiety. Klein believed that the infant emerged from the trauma of birth capable only of the simple binary reactions of love and hate, which in later formulations of her theories she identified with the Freudian life and death forces, Eros and Thanatos. The experience of hatred in particular colours this first phase, developing in the infant a sadistic intensity toward those external objects regarded as threatening or non–comforting. The psychic defence functions which evolve with the development of the ego alongside this binary are consequently the basic defence functions of psychic life,

and focus on external objects according to their experiential status for the infant as an introjective process, aimed at loved objects, or a projective process, aimed at hated objects. The infant consequently perceives external objects in the first phase of its life not in terms of their essential identity but simply in terms of whether experience with them is pleasurable or unpleasurable. Klein later added to introjection and projection the defence mechanisms of splitting, whereby the ego can defend itself against the perceived bad object by splitting itself and disowning the part(s) of the ego associated with that object, and projective identification, in which the ego identifies with an external object and projects its feelings onto it in order to create a sense of security through psychic connection.

In formulating this approach, Klein convincingly explains the origin, development and prominence of projection and introjection as defence mechanisms in human mental process, and articulated them within this phase of infantile life which she saw as requiring the infant to adopt a "paranoid–schizoid position." She argued that each infantile experience in this phase involves a form of projection in which external objects assume the qualities of internalized reactions so that internal pleasure equates with a "good object" (e.g. the breast generating pleasure through nourishment, contact, etc.) whilst internal displeasure equals a "bad object." The importance of this basic formulation was Klein's belief that its distortion in the ensuing development of the ego, when the transition is made from identifying internally to mediating this technique with externally recognized phenomena, could lay the bases of future mental illness. The problem, Klein felt, lay in the development of ambivalences in feeling towards objects where both loving and destructive feelings arose especially with regard to loved objects, such as the mother. In this situation it is necessary for the ego

to "introject" the loved object (that is, absorb and build into one's own personality ideas and personality traits observed externally) rather than continue to project internal feeling. Failure to undergo this transformation in perceptual process and thus to ease the possible anxieties, according to Klein, results in future depressive illness and lays a basis for paranoid traits in the personality, essentially through a continuing and selective exclusion of reality:

> From the beginning the ego introjects objects "good" and "bad," for both of which its mother's breast is the prototype—for good objects when the child obtains it and for bad when it fails him. But it is because the baby projects its own aggression on to these objects that it feels them to be "bad" and not only in that they frustrate its desires: the child conceives of them as actually dangerous—persecutors who it fears will devour it, scoop out the inside of its body, cut it to pieces, poison it—in short, compassing its destruction by all the means which sadism can devise... Hence, quite little children pass through anxiety situations (and react to them with defence mechanisms), the content of which is comparable to that of the psychoses of adults.[62]

Klein identifies quite clearly that it is the energy of aggression, connected as it is in these contexts to hatred and the death drive, which the infant must learn to control and utilize within its developing senses of mental defence. The consequence of failure is seen to be:

> scotomization, the *denial of psychic reality*; this may result in a considerable restriction of the mechanisms of introjection and projection and in the denial of external reality, and it forms the bases of the most severe psychoses. Very soon, too, the ego tries to defend itself against internalized persecutors by the processes of expulsion and projection. At the same time, since the dread of internalized objects is by no means extinguished with their projection, the ego marshals against the persecutors inside the body the same forces as it employs against those in the outside world. These anxiety contents and defence mechanisms form the basis of paranoia.[63]

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[62]Melanie Klein, 'A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic–Depressive States' (1935) in The Selected Melanie Klein (New York 1987), pp.116–117.

[63]Klein, 'A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic–Depressive States,' p.117. Text italics.

The importance of Klein's views for a theory of *paranoia* lie in their identification of a paranoid perceptual tendency shared by all in the initial stages of life. It must be said in fairness to Karl Abraham that Klein's identification of a "paranoid–schizoid position" in infancy, and its development around notions of ambivalence, introjection and projection, proceeded in part from Abraham's prior opinion that *paranoia* consisted of a regression to an earlier phase of anal sadism which involved a partial introjection of the loved object.[64] Klein, however, incorporated these ideas, particularly the acute analyses of the ambivalence and hatred surrounding excrement, into the wider dimensions of her project and took them further in the attempt to trace the initial developments of mental process. If her ideas are an accurate description of early mental life—and they proceed from case studies—then the premise put forward by Freud and others in more recent years, that perception is formed and informed in part by *paranoia*, can be endorsed from the beginnings of existential awareness.

As well as identifying *paranoia* as an "exaggeration" or "abuse" of "normal" mental process, certain twentieth century analyses have followed the lead initiated by Freud in Totem and Taboo and have more directly opened up the connections between *paranoia* and prevailing social conditions. Ernst Kretschmer's formulation of *paranoia* in the early decades is an instance of this, where his description of "sensitive delusions of reference" inside mental tendencies linked to contemporary diagnoses of *paranoia* suggests as a causative function psychological stress more or less related to social trauma.[65] Jacques Lacan went further than this in his 1932 doctoral thesis on

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[64]Karl Abraham, The Selected Papers of Karl Abraham (New York 1954), p.490.

[65]See Ernst Kretschmer, Der sensitive Beziehungswahn (Berlin 1927).

paranoia. In it he concluded an intricate study of a patient, including a selection of her writings, by asserting that paranoid mechanisms make up the very structure of the ego, a conclusion contemporarily in line with Melanie Klein's work, though approaching the issue differently, not least in Lacan's concentration on mature mental process and linked functions of language. Furthermore, what adds flavour to Lacan's writings at this time was his involvement with the French surrealist movement, which tinged his doctoral rigidity with an impetus toward discovering the full range of mental and perceptual possibilities. In the same time–frame that Lacan published his thesis, surrealists such as Salvador Dali were examining the dimensions of their creative activity and linking these to the vistas seen to be available to those with mental disorders. Silvano Arieti states that:

> Dali often refers to his own paranoia, and he has written, "all men are equal in their madness...madness constitutes the common basis of the human spirit." I believe that what he calls "the common basis of the human spirit" is the primary process; it is not Plato's universals but those fantastic universals that Vico described...
>
> Dali correctly believes that paranoiacs have "a special capacity for the recognition of double images inasmuch as their disordered minds are hypersensitive to hidden appearances, real or imagined."[66]

Lacan's analysis is less flamboyant, particularly as it continues in its own way the analytic drive for certainty through exhaustive post–Freudian surveillance of a patient's personal history:

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[66]Silvano Arieti, Creativity: The Magic Synthesis (New York 1976), pp.228–229. Arieti quotes from Salvador Dali, The Concept of the Irrational (New York 1935). See also John M. MacGregor, The Discovery of the Art of the Insane (Princeton, N.J. 1989), Chapter 16, pp.271–291; and David Vilaseca Perez, The Apocryphal Subject: Masochism, Identification and Paranoia in Salvador Dali's Autobiographical Writings (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London 1992), for interesting discussions of Dali and *paranoia*. An amusing incidence, perhaps, of the reflexive nature of such a paranoid strategy can be found in the 1950's claims by United States Congressman Dondero of Michigan that surrealistic and abstract art was being used by communists to "addle" the brains of Americans.

> The key to the problems of nosology, prognosis and therapy of paranoid psychoses must be found in a *concrete* psychological analysis, applying all the facets of the subject's *development of personality*, utilizing the occurrences of his *history*, the progress of his *consciousness*, and his reactions in the *social* milieu.
>
> The method therefore implies a basis of psychopathological *monography*, as exhaustive as possible.[67]

In line with nineteenth century analyses and the example of Freud, Lacan pursues an enclosure of the patient from the origin of an identified pathological essence, suggesting that from that point all of relevance may be included in the totalizing sweep of the analyst's gaze. It can be argued that Lacan's realization of the inclusive impossibilities of this project may have been the incentive which led to his concentration on language and signification as they affect and control mental process. In the analysis of language, as Lacan relentlessly pursued it, lay the possibility of a social reductiveness or microcosm of mental process, while at the same time the structured fluidities of meaning prescribe an infinite variety of psychic patterns aligned within a basic pattern.

From this, Lacan's later treatment of *paranoia* extended into his theories concerning the unconscious, aggressivity, symbolic order and the mirror stage. The stress remained on the presence of *paranoia* at basic levels of human interaction where Lacan asserted that "the social dialectic...structures human knowledge as paranoiac," outlining a process working at the primary level of signification and belief.[68] Some years after this Lacan suggested that it is a:

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[67]Jacques Lacan, De La Psychose Paranoïaque dans ses Rapports avec la Personalité Suivi de Premiers Écrits sur la Paranoia (Paris 1975), p.345. Text italics. Passage translated by Marzia Balzani.

[68]Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience' [paper delivered 17 July, 1949] in Écrits, translated by Alan Sheridan (London 1985), p.3. A year earlier, Lacan had explored the ramifications of *paranoia*

solidity, this mass seizure of the primitive signifying chain, [which] forbids the dialectical opening that is manifested in the phenomenon of belief.

At the basis of paranoia itself, which nevertheless seems to us to be animated by belief, there reigns the phenomenon of the *Unglauben*. This is not the *not believing in it*, but the absence of one of the terms of belief, of the term which is designated the division of the subject. If, indeed, there is no belief that is full and entire, it is because there is no belief that does not presuppose in its basis that the ultimate dimension that it has to reveal is strictly correlative with the moment when its meaning is about to fade away.[69]

In terms which no doubt brutalize the subtleties of Lacan's argument, *paranoia* is viewed as a consequence of believing in an environment where belief is, by the necessity of its dependence on the signifier, continually incomplete. *Paranoia* becomes the attempt to rectify this incompletion in its psychotic seizure of the signifying chain, its attempt to seal the leakage of meaning in a systematized programme of belief. But such a seizure compounds the problem by disallowing "one of the terms of belief," the term which essentially "designates the division of the subject." Lacan appears to come to these linguistic conclusions directly from Freud's early remarks in Draft H that:

> Whenever an internal change occurs, we can choose whether we shall attribute it to an internal or external cause. If something deters us from accepting an internal origin, we naturally seize upon an external one. In the second place, we are accustomed to our internal states being betrayed to other people (by the expression of emotion). This explains normal delusions of observation and normal projection. For they are normal so long as in the process we remain conscious of our own internal change. If we forget it, and if we are left only with the leg of the syllogism that leads outwards, then we have paranoia, with its exaggeration of what people know about us and of what people have

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in and from aggressivity, also using some elements of Klein's understanding of *paranoia*, and stating that: "What I have called paranoiac knowledge is shown...to correspond in its more or less archaic forms to certain critical moments that mark the history of man's mental genesis, each representing a stage in objectifying identification." 'Aggressivity in psychoanalysis' [paper delivered mid-May 1948] in Lacan, Écrits, p.17.

[69]Jacques Lacan, 'Of The Subject Who Is Supposed To Know...' [Seminar delivered 10 June, 1964] in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis, translated by Alan Sheridan (London 1986), p.238. Text italics.

> done to us—what people know about us, what we have no knowledge of whatever, what we cannot admit. *This, then, is a misuse of the mechanism of projection for purposes of defence*.[70]

The logical structure of thought, or the use of syllogistic or dialectical reason, allows the possibility for human mental distortion under certain stresses, or as Lacan would argue, within the very linguistic dimension of thought.

The pioneering American psychiatrist Karl Menninger came to similar conclusions about the pervasiveness of *paranoia* in social terms, writing in 1930 that:

> The symptoms called "paranoid" constitute the cancer of the mental life. "Paranoid" is a technical word, so apt, however, that it has been taken over into popular speech. It should be.
> ...Paranoid delusions perpetuate class and economic wars.[71]

Menninger unfortunately does not enlarge upon this last statement, and some thirty years later restated his position in terms congruent with 1960's sociological analyses, describing *paranoia* amongst other behaviour disorders as a response to stress.[72] Along with analysts like David Riesman, Menninger saw the effects of modern technological society overriding "normal" regulatory functions within human mental process. The consequence was seen to be more extreme or more rigidly repressed measures of mental orientation, and in a classification of behaviour disorders Menninger linked paranoid tendencies to "directed aggression," as well as more generally to neurotic personality disorders.

Menninger's remarks were part of the ground swell of societal analyses which extended from Freud's explorations in Totem and Taboo and Civilization and Its

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[70]Freud, 'Draft H,' pp.111-112. Text italics.

[71]Karl Menninger, The Human Mind (New York 1937), p.83.

[72]See Karl Menninger, The Vital Balance (New York 1964).

Discontents. In the 1930's and 40's the work of Wilhelm Reich and Erich Fromm, amongst others, focused on the political manifestations of mental disorder allied to the rise of fascism, with *paranoia* seen to be a necessary adjunct to the exercise of fear and social tension. The condition was not mentioned specifically or dealt with at length, however, nor did it figure as a causal possibility beyond the analysts' borrowings from Freudian theories of human belief processes. Significantly, the explicit application of *paranoia* to fascism came in the wave of anxieties and prejudices generated during World War II, resulting in texts like Richard M. Brickner's Is Germany Incurable? (1943). Brickner endorses the pattern of *paranoia* producing *paranoia* seen already in psychiatric contexts, attributing through extensive generalization a paranoid quality to the German psyche. Brickner identifies six elements which he argues generate this national tendency:

> ...the need to dominate... The notion of equality is inadmissable, and, if it occurs, intolerable...
> ...suspiciousness—what is commonly called the persecution complex...
> ...an exaggeratedly high opinion of one's own importance (megalomania) [and therefore, no sense of humour]...
> ...false rumination over past events...retrospective falsification.
> ...absolutely logical character, once its original warped premises have been granted.
> ...the use of projection.[73]

In the circumstances of Hitler and his entourage's psychological manipulation of the German people, some truth inhabits Brickner's argument; however, these propositions are allowed to stand in themselves as truths, with little or no evidence or reinforcement. In Freud and Lacan's terms, Brickner moves from one leg of his syllogism to the conclusion with a rapidity and force generated by the latent social fears emerging in a United States which had just entered the war against Germany. In

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[73]Richard M. Brickner, M.D., Is Germany Incurable? (New York 1943), pp.61–64.

effect, Brickner simply borrows the fears of Teutonic expansionism which have inhabited European consciousness for centuries, and which are being re-employed today, as Germany unites in the Europe of the nineties, as an explicit psychic and political counter to the prospect of accumulated German power.

Brickner concludes by determining two "causes" of *paranoia* in the German instance, respectively a "constitutional theory" of heredity,[74] and environmental factors, particularly as they affect childhood and upbringing. This latter suggestion is interesting, if only in the contexts of the Schreber case and Klein, but is weakly and implausibly argued. Brickner finally compounds the insubstantiality of his propaganda when he makes the claim that:

> In the United States, society is obviously not set up in such a way as to encourage paranoid thinking. Good-humoured American "spoofing" carries the day more readily than the deadly seriousness of the paranoid way of life. A legislative body like Congress, which must not only secure the consent of the governed but put up patiently with incessant criticism from the governed, is inconceivable as a permanent part of a paranoid-tinged culture.[75]

If one considers what happened to American political dissidents through the Great Depression and the 1930s, and Japanese-Americans during World War Two, Brickner's claims are laughable. Derision, however, would be a costly standpoint within the next few years, for by March 1947 the Truman Administration had instituted unprecedented loyalty and security checks, and what came to be known as "McCarthyism" began.

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[74]Just two years previously an American study of 400 institutionalized psychotics with paranoid trends determined that only eight patients (2%) had an ancestral history of paranoid illness; see C. Miller, 'The Paranoid Syndrome' in Archives of Neurology and Psychiatry, 49 (1941), p.953.

[75]Brickner, Is Germany Incurable?, p.91.

4. *paranoia* since 1945

The status of *paranoia* in psychiatric and psychoanalytical discourse since 1945 has been one involving a greater specificity of definition and diagnosis, alongside an incorporation of *paranoia* more and more into the corpus of schizophrenia as a mental condition. Simultaneously, *paranoia* has gained wide dissemination throughout the social sciences where it has been used by "experts" and a variety of writers alike to describe a pervasive mental and behavioural affliction in modern life.

An offshoot of the mid-century psychopolitical debate with which the last chapter ended, and one peculiar in its form to the United States, attempted to establish that a paranoid element existed within American culture, and cited evidence specifically within the fascist polarities supposed to have been overcome in the victories of 1945. As an arena containing wildly fluctuating fears and exertions of totalitarian power, the issue of race in the United States has always been worthy of a paranoid diagnosis. But it was only after World War II that such a diagnosis was put forward within the terminology, and then, ironically, by a white man with reference to what he considered were African-American existential states. In his essay "The White Negro," first published in Dissent magazine in 1957, Norman Mailer developed the long-held thesis that racism creates a specific mental attitude of tension and defence into the identification of certain forms of these states, and their value in the struggle to counter the deadening automaton-inducing effects of modern totalitarian and technological society. Under the impetus of social-darwinist energies, the argument moves out from a survivalist beginning in which:

> The Negro has the simplest of alternatives: live a life of constant humility or ever-threatening danger. In such a pass where paranoia is as vital to survival as blood, the Negro had stayed alive and begun to

> grow by following the need of his body where he could.[76]

In the end, however, it is not *paranoia* which Mailer celebrates, but certain psychopathic tendencies as they exert cultural influence in their effort "to create a new nervous system...to meet the tempo of the present and the future."[77] This transfer extends from Mailer's acute understanding of *paranoia* and its workings in the American psyche, notwithstanding the borrowed simplicities of his premise here, where he realizes that the tendency of *paranoia* to rigidity may produce the very opposite of the flexible tempo-sensitive perception he seeks to define in relation to the Hipster.

In its use of *paranoia*, Mailer's analysis is retroactively racist in its selective and exclusive action, appropriating a needed energy for the suitably ordered "white negro." Thomas Pynchon's approach to the problem, in his brief and pertinent study A Journey into the Mind of Watts (1966), prefers to focus on a "pocket of reality" in which a "terrible vitality" exists in the face of:

> basic realities like disease, like failure, violence and death, which the whites have mostly chosen—and can afford—to ignore...Watts is tough; has been able to resist the unreal. If there is any drift away from reality, it is by way of mythmaking.[78]

An attempt to affirm the seriousness of such cultural diagnosis on behalf of African-Americans came later with William Grier and Price Cobbs' Black Rage (1968), where the two black psychiatrists culminated their brief but deep and wide-ranging analysis

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[76]Norman Mailer, 'The White Negro' in Advertisements For Myself (1959; London 1961), p.285.

[77]Mailer, 'The White Negro,' p.289.

[78]Thomas Pynchon, A Journey into the Mind of Watts (London 1983), pp.3, 4, 10. The essay originally appeared in the New York Times Magazine, June 12, 1966.

by defining a "black norm":

> Black men have stood so long in such peculiar jeopardy in America that a *black norm* has developed—a suspiciousness of one's environment which is necessary for survival. Black people, to a degree which approaches paranoia, must be ever alert to danger from their fellow white citizens. It is a cultural phenomenon peculiar to black Americans. And it is a posture so close to paranoid thinking that the mental disorder into which black people most frequently fall is paranoid psychosis.[79]

It would certainly be fair to argue that the history of African–American culture is a history in itself of the phenomenon Grier and Cobbs describe, and one as old as the racism it continues to confront. To Grier and Cobbs, however, goes the distinction of elucidating in the psychiatric discourse of *paranoia* what drives the endeavour of that culture at every significant level, to extend Mailer's Darwinist metaphor, as part of a necessary existential inheritance. The energy continues today in the work of Afro–American artists like jazz–musician Ornette Coleman, whose disruption of an emplaced musical perspective, as well as his racial origin, have brought him into contact with significant cultural anxieties. Coleman incisively recognizes the dimension of the *paranoia* he faces when he states:

> As a black man, I have a tendency to want to know how certain principles and rights are arrived at. When this concern dominates my business relationships, I'm cast into schizophrenic or paranoid thinking... I do not wish to be exploited for not having the knowledge or know–how required for survival in today's America. It's gotten so that in your relationships to every system that has some sort of power, you have to pay to become part of that power, just in order to do what you want to do. This doesn't build a better world, but it does build more security for the power. Power makes purpose secondary.[80]

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[79]William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs, Black Rage (New York 1968), p.173. Text italics.

[80]Ornette Coleman, interviewed by Dan Morgenstern, quoted in Joachim E. Berendt, The Jazz Book: From Ragtime to Fusion and Beyond (first translated from German 1975; London 1992), pp.121–122.

The Afro-American writer Ishmael Reed, who traces the American racist experience of *paranoia* back into the history and fears of secret societies as they exist as manipulative agencies behind a projected cultural reality, goes further when he said recently in an interview:

> Paranoia—someone once called it heightened sensitivity. I think paranoia is a good thing...for women and minorities in this country—they've earned their paranoia. Some of the things they felt were happening, *were* happening. In the '60s, there *was* secret surveillance by the government.[81]

In opposition, however, to any suggestion that race *paranoia* is a cultural necessity unique to Afro-Americans, it is clear that the same necessity inhabits the experience, to different degrees, of any other post-fifteenth century non-caucasian American people. Blackness does generate specific fears within the contexts of white anxieties, particularly in terms of inherited Manichean perceptions, but these have been readily translated by the focus of racism to other groups. The first settlers referred to Native Americans as "black men in the forest," long before the arrival of the first slaves, and the attribution of diabolic qualities has extended from there to include Asian and Slavic peoples, right up to and continuing today. Recent studies of the psychological environment facing immigrants to the United States have identified *paranoia* and forms of schizophrenia as a prevalent threat to assimilation into the host culture, with one researcher into Mexican immigrants' experiences concluding that "evidence is found that suspiciousness and the belief that others cannot be trusted increase the association of thought problems and of hallucinations and delusions with

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[81]Ishmael Reed, 'The Writer and the Joys of Paranoia' in The Washington Post, 31 August 1990, p.D1.

paranoid beliefs."[82]

By extension from this theme of social anxiety, the history of extremist or alarmist twentieth century politics in the United States has drawn its fair share of paranoid discourse and diagnosis, the most famous examples being Woodrow Wilson's Red Scare of the 1920's, various manifestations of white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, and McCarthy's pursuit of communism in the 1950's. In each case the situation is again one of *paranoia* meeting and/or defining and generating *paranoia* in the conflicts of domination and fears of powerlessness. The example of George Lincoln Rockwell, leader of the American Nazi Party for a period after World War II, is exemplary. On July 3, 1960, Rockwell was arrested in Washington, D.C. while addressing a rally, and his prosecutors requested he be committed to an institution for 30 days' psychiatric evaluation. The diagnosis stated that Rockwell had a "paranoid personality," but argued that prosecution on such psychiatric evidence in the circumstances would infringe on Rockwell's rights of free speech, presumably because Rockwell made sense to his investigators, however distorted his political ideology. In turn, and no doubt invigorated by this experience, Rockwell spent the early sixties preaching his own diagnosis of Jewish influence in the United States, stating that:

> The startling answer to the Jewish enigma is that the Jews are insane. The Jews as a race are paranoid...
>
> The Jewish masses are afflicted with the symptoms of paranoia: delusions of grandeur, delusions of persecution. The Jews believe themselves to be God's Chosen People, and they eternally complain

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[82]John Mirowsky, 'Disorder and Its Context: Paranoid Beliefs as Thematic Elements of Thought Problems, Hallucinations, and Delusions under Threatening Social Conditions' in Research in Community and Mental Health, 5, 1985, p.203.

about persecution.[83]

In a more mainstream case, Senator Barry Goldwater's run for the presidency in 1964 was greeted by 1,189 members of the American Psychiatric Association declaring him "psychologically unfit to serve as President of the United States" due to their diagnosis that he too exhibited a "paranoid personality."[84] The columnist Frank Getlein located the key event for this diagnosis, and for the proliferation of *paranoia* as a term in these political contexts, when he wrote: "[t]he present eruption of paranoia to its dominant status has to be dated at the assassination of President Kennedy."[85] The resonance of this event, striking at the core of American power consciousness, is something which even now American culture still tries to comprehend, as traumatic memory and paranoid speculation continue to intertwine. The most thoughtful use of the term, however, came in the 1964 publication of Richard Hofstadter's widely influential essay, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," which described in detail the manifestations of this American political tendency.

To Hofstadter goes the distinction of giving cultural credence and academic validity to the use of *paranoia* within social and cultural analysis, if only in the United States. Hofstadter's careful argument and intelligent use of historical materials as well as contemporary evidence would have been enough to secure the essay's reputation within academic circles, but what ensured that his ideas went further was their popular dissemination through the essay's first publication medium, the November 1964 issue of Harper's Magazine, and the prominence within the essay of compelling statements

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[83]Cited in Thomas Szaz, The Manufacture of Madness (New York 1970), p.312.

[84]Szaz, The Manufacture of Madness, p.312.

[85]Frank Getlein, The Politics of Paranoia (New York 1969), p.5.

such as:

> In fact, the idea of the paranoid style would have little contemporary relevance or historical value if it were applied only to people with profoundly disturbed minds. It is the use of paranoid modes of expression by more or less normal people that makes the phenomenon significant...
> It is, above all, a way of seeing the world and of expressing oneself.[86]

Hofstadter's essay thus crucially secures the proximity of *paranoia* to "normal" social and political process and convincingly argues the implicit and continuing action of *paranoia* in American culture and politics, even if that presence in its more malign forms is limited to the margins of public life. What appeals most of all, in a populist sense, is the stress on the location of truth, and its interactions in the arena of American political perspectives, where the "paranoid style" takes coherence to levels of intensity beyond the norm in its committed use of rationality. Hofstadter sees that the "paranoid style":

> is nothing if not coherent—in fact, the paranoid mentality is far more coherent than the real world, since it leaves no room for mistakes, failures, or ambiguities. It is, if not wholly rational, at least intensely rationalistic...[87]

This identification of certainty tied into the political scope of rationality, emerging from Hofstadter's more general comments on paranoid fears to do with power and powerlessness, becomes the lynchpin of the essay's conclusion. It not only serves to explain the episodic return of *paranoia* in the arena of American politics and the capability of its practitioners to attract attention and/or support, but with a clarity of

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[86]Richard Hofstadter, 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics' in The Paranoid Style in American Politics (New York 1965), p.4. The essay was first delivered as the Herbert Spencer Lecture at Oxford University, November 1963, and then published in abridged form in Harper's Magazine, November 1964.

[87]Hofstadter, 'The Paranoid Style in American Politics,' p.36.

its own brings wider cultural recognition to the discourse of psychiatry and psychoanalysis on the same topic, whose own dissemination was limited variously by elitist opacities and specialization.

Following the political opportunism and terror of the 1950's, and the Kennedy assassination, both of which provided the motivation for Hofstadter's analysis, the downturn of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s became the period in which *paranoia* found really widespread American cultural acceptance and use. This was given the popular sanction of Rolling Stone magazine when it published a collection of its late 1960s and early 1970s articles under the title, The Age of Paranoia, using the writing of Hunter S. Thompson and Ralph Gleason amongst others. In one of the articles, "Festival Paranoia," Gleason reports from the ostensibly communal and utopian events of 1969 that: "These are the paranoid years. Paranoia is not only fashionable, its endemic. Nobody trusts or believes anybody anymore and the resulting rot is doing more harm than speed."[88] Harper's Magazine followed up its publication of Richard Hofstadter's essay a decade later with a June 1974 cover article by Hendrik Hertzberg and David McClelland, entitled "Paranoia." The article was subtitled somewhat tardily, "An idée fixe whose time has come," while the contents page bore the citation, "Paranoia – a psychosis that soothes egos, smooths social relationships, and runs the country." The writers conclude in agreement with Hofstadter that "Paranoia is the very opposite of meaninglessness; indeed, paranoia drenches every detail of the world in meaning,"[89] and also interestingly highlight the notion of a

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[88]Ralph J. Gleason, 'Festival Paranoia,' 6 September, 1969 in ed. Rolling Stone Editors, The Age of Paranoia (New York 1972), p.424.

[89]Hendrik Hertzberg and David C. K. McClelland, 'Paranoia' in Harper's Magazine, June 1974, p.60.

"positive paranoia" which they draw from Andrew Weil's book, The Natural Mind: A New Way of Looking at Drugs and the Higher Consciousness (1972).[90] Weil's concept springs from his explorations of drugs and their place in Western and non–Western cultures, which he undertook in the 1960s at Harvard medical school and then the Haight–Ashbury district of San Francisco. He contrasts "positive paranoia" with "negative paranoia" within the framework of two possible strands of human experience, so–called "straight thinking" or the domination of logic–based intellectual process, and "stoned thinking," or intuitive, non–intellectual process, as they arise from Western cultures' reaction to consciousness–altering substances. Weil's route to his conclusions, evident in his book's quotations and references, is a potent mix of personal empirical study (he has published many authoritative articles in scientific periodicals) and the classic post–World War Two counter–culture development in America by way of Eastern mysticism, Aldous Huxley, D. T. Suzuki and Christmas Humphries, and an informed 1960's interrogation of establishment opinion. Weil picks up on *paranoia* as "a common experience in the drug subculture and elsewhere"[91] and differentiates between two forms of the condition. The first occurs in "straight" intellectual perception and its pattern–forming tendencies, which he believes produce profoundly negative tensions through misunderstanding and fear of the alternate consciousness made available by hallucinogenics, a fear primarily of loss of the identity granted by rigid, linear and logic–based experiential process. In contrast, the second form directly utilizes the urge toward pattern and coherence as a positive

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[90]reprinted and revised as The Natural Mind: An Investigation of Drugs and the Higher Consciousness (Boston 1986).

[91]Weil, The Natural Mind, p.177.

experience of unity and centeredness. Weil states that "anyone who reads firsthand accounts of mystic experience or flashes of enlightenment must be struck by the underlying identity with negative paranoia," and goes on to say that:

> Psychologists in the Haight-Ashbury Research Project of Mount Zion Hospital's Department of Psychiatry (a NIMH-funded project) have recently turned up cases of what they call "benign paranoia": young members of the San Francisco drug subculture...who seem to feel that "the universe is a conspiracy organized for my benefit."[92]

Weil argues that cultural ways need to be found in which this "positive paranoia" can be substituted for the negative form to ease the aggressions and fears produced by the straight intellect's inability to deal with the ambivalences which daily confront mental process.

More recently "positive paranoia" has re-emerged in Fred H. Goldner's theory of "pronoia," which he terms the "positive counterpart to paranoia."[93] Goldner is more specific than Weil in his definition of an individual's perception which persistently misinterprets others' reactions to s/he as more favourable than they really are. Hilariously, and with more than a little relevance, a number of analysts immediately leapt to the defence of medical practice by disavowing Goldner's claim that "pronoia" deserved the status of a disease:

> Goldner implies that pronoia is a disease by comparing it to paranoia, yet the former does not fit the disease framework. Since the behavior in question is easily medicalized, however, it could in time qualify as a disease. This would be unfortunate, and Goldner's insights are best approached outside the medical framework.[94]

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[92]Weil, The Natural Mind, p.179. "NIMH" is the National Institute for Mental Health.

[93]Fred H. Goldner, 'Pronoia' in Social Problems, 30, 1982, pp.82-91.

[94]Richard Hawkins, Laurence J. Kirmayer & Fred H. Goldner, 'Comments on "Pronoia"' in Social Problems, 31, 1983, pp.165-179. See also Laurence J. Kirmayer, Paranoia and Pronoia: The Visionary and the Banal (Montreal 1983).

Unfortunately, since 1972 the ideas of Weil and Goldner have had little effect in the mediation of any ambivalence to do with drugs which has swung overwhelmingly towards the negative attitudes prevalent today. The position of *paranoia* as a "common experience" in drug culture has intensified particularly with the ascendancy of amphetamine and cocaine–derived substance use, as any reading of recent psychiatric evaluation of narcotics use will demonstrate.[95] *Paranoia* has long been known to be induced in those using amphetamines or "speed" beyond certain metabolic endurances, and more recently has emerged as a major dimension in crack–cocaine addiction cycles. Within the range of these drug uses *paranoia* centres on the mixture of anxiety induced by illegality and connected surreptitiousness and violence, the placing of a consciousness in a fixed desire cycle of manipulated supply and accelerating demand where pattern means everything, and the increased intensity of awareness, suspiciousness and delusions of grandeur produced by the drugs.

The use of technology and the rapid technological advances made since the beginning of the century have also been areas of cultural activity and experience thought to be conducive to *paranoia*. Anxieties about technology, particularly as that technology may exert invasory, surveillance or physical control of human beings, have always been part of social perceptions of the inventor or technician; one has only to trace the literary representations of shamans, wizards and witch doctors through to more recent and analogous treatments of alchemists, scientists and inventors to uncover a pervasive sense of threat. A linked phenomenon is one of the lightning rods of paranoid discourse, namely the intense scrutiny given to Masonic organizations

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[95]see, for instance, the bibliographies in William Meissner's The Paranoid Process (New York 1978), and Psychotherapy and the Paranoid Process (Northvale, N.J. 1986) for their detailing of the enormous research investigating *paranoia* and drug use.

whose formation occurred at a crucial intersection of religious and technological energies, where the fraternity of mobile groups of technicians arose, at their outset at least, in the construction of religious enclosures and structures for worship. More prominent in the *paranoia* surrounding Freemasonry are the fears generated by secrecy and the sense of unseen controlling networks permeating social activity, yet at certain points in its emergence, such as the period of medieval and Renaissance construction of cathedrals in Europe, anxieties about the Masons had a great deal to do with technological skill and its capability of focusing energy into social control.[96] Henry Adams's famous metaphor of focused energy in his "The Dynamo and the Virgin" section of The Education of Henry Adams (1907) suggests the catalyst of these fears, as they arise at the intersection of human belief, technological endeavour and divine or infinite energy, when he states that technology's "value lay chiefly in its occult mechanism."[97] In this, the unexplained, the invisible and the potential of infinite force or control all operate within the "respect of power," as Adams terms it, to undermine human senses of security and post–Enlightenment reliance on reason, producing a number of possible responses. Among these Adams debates the pursuit of historical causalities, in itself a paranoid exercise when taken to extremes, and another, and more predominant social strategy, that of falling back into already–emplaced structures of superstition which seek less to locate origin or explanation than to find security in the exertion of their own control.

The application of *paranoia* as a psychological concept to the twentieth century

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[96]for an interesting yet culpably paranoid account of the development of Masonic societies, see Michael Howard, The Occult Conspiracy (London 1989).

[97]Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams (1907; New York 1931), pp.380–381.

phenomenon of technological fears has been one which has gained momentum particularly within the contexts of electronic, nuclear and weapons technology. Ground was broken for the application of psychology to technological fears long before, a late and important example in the United States being George M. Beard's inclusive concept of "neurasthenia," which he elaborated in a number of books and pamphlets towards the end of the nineteenth century. Beard's American Nervousness, Its Causes and Consequences (1881) determined that:

> nervousness is strictly deficiency or lack of nerve force. This condition...has developed mainly within the nineteenth century, and is especially frequent and severe in the Northern and Eastern portions of the United States...
>
> The chief and primary cause of this development and very rapid increase of nervousness is *modern civilization*, which is distinguished from the ancient by these five characteristics: steam power, the periodical press, the telegraph, the sciences, and the mental activity of women.[98]

Notwithstanding a fear of women's independence, Beard's stress is wholly on technology and he develops an argument whose underlying thrust pits the human field of energies, imaged primarily through the notion of "nerve force," against the interferences and drainage which he sees as being implicit in the use of technological energies.

The anxieties articulated and analysed in recent years about technological advance draw on similar fears, and psychiatry and psychoanalysis have not been the only sciences to identify their manifestation using the concept of *paranoia*. For some years, computer science has been a site of some psychiatric investigation of *paranoia*, one element utilizing computer models of artificially constructed intelligence to pursue

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[98]George M. Beard, American Nervousness, Its Causes and Consequences (New York 1881), p.vi. Text italics. Significantly, Beard states further on that "[n]ervousness does not mean unbalanced mental organization" (p.1).

the possible dimensions of paranoid perception.[99] These models generate a particular validity at the comparative level of computing's binary logic and similar binaries in paranoid thinking, a validity which ironically has been endorsed by both machines and operators in the 1980's emergence of the so-called "computer virus." Invading and causing the seizure and immobilization of computer data banks and programs, such "viruses" are programs transmitted electronically through computer link-ups and the exchange of information, invariably using modes of priority to assert their precedence over all other command operations. The posing of the problem in terms of disease and the disruption of health is in itself a resonant discourse of *paranoia*, as has already been analysed with regard to American plague fears in the 1790s; more immediately, however, some of those concerned with the subversion of many levels of the global computing network indicated the cast of their perceptions when, in a theoretical and practical response to the threat, they termed an "anti-viral" alignment of computing processes the "Watchdog/Paranoia concept."[100] In effect, this concept describes the programming of a computer system to interrogate all inputs with an artificially generated suspicion as to their content and intent, and to implement security procedures to protect memory and function should an input attempt any "corruption" of the system. Again, to link human and artificial intelligence processes, a notable parallel occurs between the two in their paranoid dimensions when the investigators of the "Watchdog/Paranoia concept" determine that any effective protection of

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[99]see, for instance, William S. Faught, Motivation and Intentionality in a Computer Simulation Model of Paranoia (Basel 1978).

[100]T. E. Sobczak and R. W. Trickey, 'Front-End Anti-Viral Detection Using Replicating/Self-Replicating Software' in U.S. Government Publication No.ADA2142552XSP (Application Configured Computers, Inc., Baldwin, New York), 19 October, 1989.

computer systems alongside those systems' continued and efficient operation is currently impossible. In computing terms, such blanket coverage disables the speed and capacity of systems, mirroring the staticity and rigidity enforced on the paranoid by endlessly recycling suspicion, a perceptual situation which is intensified in both perspectives by the permutations of applicable logic.

At a more mundane level, computers have highlighted the persistent popular fear of technology in their extension of technology beyond the service of simple human needs to the satisfaction of a scientific thrust whose energy comes from the pursuit of logical progressions, and more importantly, the increasing capitalization of the technological presence in everyday life. One analysis of the problem has connected *paranoia* and its power anxieties to computer fears, concluding that the perception of an "[e]xternal locus of control has...been identified as a predictor of computer anxiety."[101] In the same context, the psychologist Dr. Mike Burton involves the historical extent from magic to mechanics in his vocabulary when he says about "technophobia"—the fear of technology—that if computers "were designed around the humans who were to use them, working in information technology wouldn't be such a black art."[102] The argument in favour of simplistic icon-based process in computers and other modern technology is undercut, however, by the implicit ideology of the article in which Burton's ideas appear. Rather than evoking the scenario of a technological environment free of *paranoia*, which Burton advocates, the article

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[101]R. Baumgarte, 'Computer Anxiety and Instruction,' unpublished paper presented at the Spring Meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association, Atlanta, GA, March 28–31, 1984.

[102]Dr. Mike Burton, 'A Programme For Paranoia?' in The Sunday Times Magazine, 8 May, 1987, p.74.

includes product endorsement and ends by intensifying the power anxieties from which "technophobia" ultimately arises. Those suffering from computer "technophobia" are instructed to "[l]earn to use the machine in ways you may never need. By doing this you'll achieve a comforting feeling of mastery—and a reputation as a citizen of the age."[103] In trying to fit both human and machine to prevailing economic requirements it thus becomes necessary to generate anxiety as part of the larger commitments to social control carried out by corporate capitalism.

Further application of *paranoia* to technological fears has been evident at different sociological levels in the twentieth century, present to varying degrees in the societal analyses mentioned before of Freud, Reich and Fromm, amongst others. It has emerged more specifically in recent years as a descriptive term for the human condition within the psychological pressures of the cold war, about which the writings of Arthur Koestler, sociologist Christopher Lasch and psychotherapist Joel Kovel are exemplary. Koestler's extraordinary book, The Ghost in the Machine (1967), undertakes a critique of human perceptions and control of behaviour as he sees it extending from a history of misinterpretation and discoordination of human mental capabilities and resources. A key part of Koestler's analysis rests on his suggestion as to how humans have organized mental process, predicating a capability to recognize what he calls "holons," or component parts of systems or wholes, and use them accordingly in the development of understanding which can take in the minutiae of a situation as well as a bigger picture. Koestler then identifies a "paranoid streak" running throughout history which he believes emerges from combinations and misalignments of older superstitious tendencies and instinctive thought processes, with

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[103]Burton, "A Programme for Paranoia?' p.74.

newer forms of rationality affirming belief from the egotistically assumed complete bases of holons. Added to this, finally, is the twentieth–century phenomenon of mass fanaticism within modern totalitarian politics, with all these issues determining in Koestler's view that the "*integrative tendencies of the individual are incomparably more dangerous than his self–assertive tendencies*...the delusional streak which runs through our history may be an endemic form of paranoia, built into the wiring circuits of the brain."[104] Koestler's vocabulary remains linked to that identified before in this discursive history as eager to secure physiological locations for aberrancy over other factors, particularly where he settles on the term "schizophysiology," arising out of his explorations of bicameral brain operations, as one more specific to the debate. That notwithstanding, Koestler elucidates a penetrating and impassioned argument against the distortion of creative activity, or what he calls the capability of "self–transcendence," within which *paranoia* has its agency:

> Thus the glory and the tragedy of the human condition *both derive from our powers of self–transcendence*. It is a power which can be harnessed to creative or destructive purpose...
>
> What we are concerned with is a cure for the paranoic streak in what we call normal people, i.e., mankind as a whole: an artificially simulated, adaptive mutation to bridge the rift between the phylogenetically old and new brain, between instinct and intellect, emotion and reason.[105]

Unfortunately, Koestler concludes with a plea for "a state of dynamic equilibrium in

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[104]Arthur Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine (1967; London 1989), pp.233, 239. Text italics. Koestler's work extends from a sequence of extraordinary investigations in this area of human behaviour which include Elias Canetti, Crowds and Power (1960; London 1987) and Eric Hoffer, The True Believer (New York 1951). See also Josef Rudin, Fanaticism (Notre Dame 1969) and André Haynal, Miklos Molnar and Gérard de Puymège, Fanaticism: A Historical and Psychoanalytical Study (1980; New York 1983).

[105]Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine, pp.245, 336. Text italics.

which thought and emotion are re-united, and hierarchic order is restored,"[106] basing his belief in its attainability in contemporary optimisms about the potential chemical regulation of thought within democratic controls. Admittedly, this faith is beyond Aldous Huxley and Timothy Leary's promotion of mescaline and LSD, respectively, but in the light of pharmaceutical multinational corporations and their controls over behaviour as evidenced, say, in the recent Prozac affair, such faith is both dated and alarmingly dependent on notions of "hierarchic order" within which *paranoia* inevitably holds its sway.

Christopher Lasch's The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times (1984) undertakes a cultural analysis from the statement that Western societies exhibit a "growing dependence on technologies no one seems to understand or control," giving rise to a dominant sense "of victimization and paranoia, of being manipulated, invaded, colonized, and inhabited by alien forces."[107] Kovel is altogether more incisive with his concentration on annihilation fears in Against the State of Nuclear Terror (1983), outlining a social context shaped by the use of science in an effort to dominate nature using logic and force. The effect on the psyche of such a "Cartesian-technocratic" attitude and practice, in tandem with the resentment shared by all humans at losing the unconditional omnipotence of infancy, is seen to be threefold: a deep-seated hatred, terror and *paranoia*. All three reactions are directed at overcoming a sensed powerlessness, and are only intensified in the atomic age by the threat of mass destruction, where global strategy is one of terrorism and coercion

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[106]Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine, p.336.

[107]Christopher Lasch, The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times (New York 1984), p.44.

supposed to prevent terrorism and coercion.[108]

These sociological uses of *paranoia* have tended toward a looser use of the term in their inclusive scope, whereas psychiatric discourse has maintained the direction detailed before with regard to specializations and exclusions, with little advancement or expansion of the *paranoia* concept beyond the dimensions outlined by Freud. One exception to this in American psychiatry occurred in the influential work and theories of Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949) who diverged from Freudian theory by diminishing the role of projection and dismissing the homosexual element insisted upon by Freud as a vital component of any paranoid manifestation. Sullivan's distinctly sociological approach, which he termed "interpersonal psychiatry," was founded principally on an analysis of the reflexive effects of an individual's self–esteem, observed in its variations from infancy through to the interpersonal relationships developed in psychological maturity. Within this theoretical framework Sullivan determined two scenarios in which *paranoia* may develop. The first viewed *paranoia* as a residual state of schizophrenia, most often occurring after transitory schizophrenic attacks and brought on by the panic and anxiety implicit in the acute personality destabilization caused in schizophrenia. The second approach goes deeper and identifies a causal process which begins in childhood from a catalyst termed "malevolent transformation," in which, in simple terms, the child's unsatisfied desire for affection and tenderness is transformed into resentment (the concept used by Joel Kovel, above). The problem this presents for the child, and the tension which sets up a potential for *paranoia*, according to Sullivan, is that experienced in a relationship

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[108]As in the geopolitical strategy fostered and adopted by the United States between 1960–1989, aptly called Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD).

where elements of physical security and comfort are forthcoming but emotional contact is limited or non-existent. Such a tension develops in the individual a difficulty in distinguishing between those who pose a threat and those who might offer emotionally gratifying contact. If a pattern of rejection by loved ones continues, and particularly if it extends into adolescence, Sullivan predicts disastrous consequences:

> A great many children learn that anger will aggravate the situation and they develop instead *resentment*; and resentment has very important covert aspects. Sometimes even the resentment has to be concealed in childhood, and this gradually results in a self-system process which precludes one's knowing [the child's] resentment. Again, I have commented on the fact that the manifesting of the need for tenderness toward the significant people around one often leads to one's being disadvantaged, made anxious, made fun of, and so on. And in this way the groundwork is laid for the malevolent attitude toward life in general, in which other people are viewed as enemies, which is the greatest disaster that happens in childhood, in that it may represent a great handicap for profitable experience in the subsequent stages of development.[109]

The movement onwards into *paranoia* occurs in a mode where "the usual solution in chronological maturity is to cover one's chronic defect in self-esteem by disparaging others—a solution which is used by all of us in varying degrees."[110] The perspective is, again, markedly one of experience and perception of empowerment, beginning from the index of Sullivan's psychiatric investigation, self-esteem, while projection in any pure mechanistic form is deflected in the assertion that "people with chronically low self-esteem anticipate unfavorable opinions in others; and I do not think that the mechanism of projection accounts for much of anything."[111]

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[109]Harry Stack Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York 1953), p.345. Text italics.

[110]Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry, p.344.

[111]Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry, p.359.

Sullivan's influence on American psychiatry has since been pervasive, though his dismissal of projection, coming before the work done by David Shapiro, has had little effect on a scientific perception whose basic structure remains largely Freudian. Post–World War II studies of *paranoia* have thus either re–examined the Freudian premises, or tentatively expanded the medical gaze to include sociological perspectives, though as we have seen, the discursive practice is always one careful to determine the boundaries of medical certainty, within which it includes itself. Such a tendency informs the work of the most prominent of current American analysts of *paranoia*, William Meissner, S.J. His The Paranoid Process (1978) and Psychotherapy and the Paranoid Process (1986) both present exhaustive theoretical and practical examinations of the condition, the former text noting at the outset the current status of *paranoia* in contemporary mental science:

> The trend...has been in the direction of using the concept of paranoia with greater flexibility and with greater applicability. It is used not only as a diagnostic category but also as a descriptive personality trait which is characterized by isolation, hypersensitivity, guardedness, suspiciousness and the use of projection as defence.[112]

Meissner's involvement in "the trend" becomes a reflection of the dominant psychiatric and psychoanalytic connection of this fluid identity to wider cultural analysis. *Paranoia* is referred to as a "process" within a set of pathologies whose identities and territory of operation are carefully traced in the intersection of case studies and the historical development of theory. The notion of "greater flexibility" in these circumstances is a misnomer, a nervous and rigid gesture from inside a scientific and historical retrenchment outwards toward a vague, generalized notion of social and cultural activity, which wallows unconvincingly in the wake of Freud's central premise

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[112]William Meissner, S.J. The Paranoid Process (New York 1978), p.3.

in Civilization and Its Discontents:

> The essential insight I have tried to articulate and substantiate, both by careful study of more traditional views of paranoia and by careful examination of pathological expressions of the syndrome, is that the basic mechanisms, which play themselves out in distorted and exaggerated forms in the pathology, are in fact the same basic mechanisms endemic to the human developmental process. These mechanisms contribute meaningfully and in profoundly important ways to the building up of human personality, to the establishment and sustaining of human identity, and to the elaboration and maintenance of the social and cultural structures within which such identities take shape and find their ultimate expression and cohesion. The consequence of this perspective is that paranoia, as a form of psychopathology, cannot simply be dissociated from the positive forces and processes which serve to build up and maintain meaningful and constructive areas of human growth and experience. The question remains ultimately to what degree the deviance and impairment of paranoid forms of pathology are indeed the price we pay for the constructive achievements and attainments that characterize human society and culture.[113]

The "consequence" of Meissner's "perspective," following these prefatory remarks, is a deflection of this fundamental issue from the bulk of the text until the final chapter, entitled "The Paranoid Process in Adaption," which attempts to bridge the textually–accumulated gap between psychopathology and a colourless, empty sociology. A range of conclusions are sought but all tail off into generalization as they move outside and become disconnected from the emplacements of psychiatric discourse. When Meissner states: "Our basic hypothesis with respect to the organization of society is that social processes organize themselves in such a way as to provide appropriate contexts within which the paranoid process comes into play..."[114] he articulates a truth; he also says a great deal about the siege mentality of psychiatric science and its desire to include and regulate all social process within its vision, something about the fluid status of

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[113]Meissner, The Paranoid Process, pp.ix–x.

[114]Meissner, The Paranoid Process, p.807.

paranoia as a concept in contemporary science and culture, but nothing at all of any gravity for an understanding of its influence in human existence. The cornerstone of Meissner's approach is his theory of process, a strategy formulated in reaction to the increasingly diffuse identity of *paranoia* in both scientific and cultural terms. This effort is primarily aimed at involving the current premier segments of psychoanalytic theory in a total apprehension of *paranoia*, as is stated at the beginning of Meissner's

Psychotherapy and the Paranoid Process:

> The theory of the paranoid process builds on and extends three essential aspects of the psychoanalytic perspective: systematic ego psychology, object-relations theory, and self psychology. The core elements of the paranoid process operate as ego functions, but they also derive from and modify object relationships, and contribute core constituents to the organization of self structure.[115]

The rigidity of his analysis, however, and its commitment to a discursive logic more intent on gaining the validity granted by its "scientific" apprehension overcomes any growth or potential for flexibility which might be promised in the notion of "process." Meissner's ultimate conclusion in terms of a cultural overview is an empty repetition of the theoretical and narrative effort, a final refocusing of attention on a resonant symbol of psychoanalytic control, where it is explained that "[t]he burden of the argument is that there is a link and a line of continuity that runs between the psychoanalytic couch and the rest of the broad realms of human experience and activity."[116] Process in Meissner's terms thus becomes a shackle to psychiatric discourse, rather than the release required to extend or dissolve the boundaries of knowledge and power which would lend a genuinely new and valuable perspective on

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[115]William Meissner, S.J., Psychotherapy and the Paranoid Process (Northvale, N.J. 1986), pp.14-15.

[116]Meissner, The Paranoid Process, p.817.

paranoia. The desire is for precisely the control imaged in the centering on the analyst's couch where all identities converge and the truth of an identity may be formed by the analyst in a continuity which promises the safety of repetition.

The nub of the problem, as we have seen throughout this history of discourses, is the *paranoia* inherent in the use, arrangement and analysis of power, for Meissner's project effectively articulates the force behind the analyses of a condition which, perhaps more than any other so-called mental aberration, is inextricably linked to control: the control of perception, and thence, the control of others. The psychiatric discourses of *paranoia* carry out such a programme themselves and are consequently in the reflexive position of anxiously formulating the dimensions of a condition whose frictions with discursive controls accurately reproduce the disturbance of political power. In confronting *paranoia*, psychiatry confronts itself, and indeed, needs to confront itself to register the effects of its control and to locate that which must be ordered. Such confrontation, however, always fails to reach the explicit point of actual recognition (the mental sciences can never diagnose themselves as sick or aberrant as the marginalizations of the so-called "anti-psychiatry" have demonstrated), and thus the therapeutic programmes and analyses continue to be generalized and ambiguous projects intent on maintaining the securities of established practice. It is precisely this action which has led Félix Guattari to comment:

> Psychoanalysis is no science: it is a politico-religious movement and should be treated in the same way as all the other movements that have proposed models of behaviour for particular times and contexts. Its conception of desire is 'ahead of its time' in appearance only; it is ahead only in perfecting the repressive support required by the logic of the system, and overhauling a technique of interpreting and re-directing desire and of internalizing repression. The object of psychoanalysis is,

in brief, what I would call *collective paranoia*...[117]

For *paranoia* is about power and the ordering of power, both as a condition and as an articulation of a condition. The use of the term within a wider framework of cultural discourse may provide more clues to this conspiracy of power.

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[117]Félix Guattari, Molecular Revolution: Psychiatry and Politics (Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1984), p.86.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Failure of Integration
paranoia in Recent American Culture & Literature

1. *The Kingdom of Death*

Since 1945, the changes to be observed in *paranoia* and its cultural presence have been radical and transformative. The effects of power already identified and their production of *paranoia* carry over into the period but undergo an extraordinary continuity under the impetus of two interlinked processes: the electronic revolution and its influence on the entire range of existential action, and the triumph of capitalist modes of production in the West as, in Hannah Arendt's terms, the totalitarianism emerging in the 1930's absorbed prior forms of imperialism. The development of political processes from the 1790s onwards within the impetuses of the industrial revolution, and already partially explored in the dissertation's introduction, emerges further in Arendt's understanding of the dominant place of ideology in these engineered environments. She states that: "[i]deological thinking orders facts into an absolutely logical procedure which starts from an axiomatically accepted premise, deducing everything else from it..."[1] The complexity of the political situation is one concerning:

> a restructuring of consciousness as both constituting and constituted in relation to its social and political field. Thus totalitarianism in power, in its drive towards global domination, witnessed the decline of the nation–state, the extension of statelessness, and the associated loss of rights of residence and government protection...the destruction of privacy and critical sensibility, the replacement of public involvement by indifferent passivity and loneliness, and the creation of a mass of

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[1]Hannah Arendt, The Origins of Totalitarianism (1951; London 1986), p.471.

> indoctrinated units "for whom the distinction between fact and fiction...and the distinction between true and false...no longer exist[ed]."[2]

The post–1945 period effectively saw the consolidation of the United States' position as a major global power achieved after World War One. This was a necessary process after the setback of the Depression in the 1930's and the cosmetic confusions of the New Deal threatened to deny capitalist process its required expansion. World War Two provided the appropriate energies for a consolidation to take place, generating the two political forces which every state desires and which only war can deliver on capitalist terms: the unity of a nation at war, and the massive stimulation of the economy war production produces.[3] That the scenario described by Arendt and Carter should afflict the United States—and ensure a continuing basis for the forms of *paranoia* already studied—is due essentially to a post–war malaise of power. This malaise intensified a predicament for the United States in which, according to Eric Mottram, "[t]he American psyche is an extreme expression of a condition endemic in societies which need to believe themselves terminal and invincible, and which are therefore prone to perpetual anxiety."[4] The striking manifestations of this need occurred in the linked events which still underpin much of the American and international political situation: the global arms race, the anti–communist energies of the cold war and McCarthy period, and the disaster of the most visible of United

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[2]Dale Carter, The Final Frontier: The Rise and Fall of the American Rocket State (London 1988), p.20. Quotation from Arendt's The Origins of Totalitarianism.

[3]In a lecture given at the Battersea Arts Centre, November 1988, Noam Chomsky estimated that immediately after World War Two the United States controlled 50% of global wealth; he estimates that share as currently about 20%, and probably declining following the economic policies of the 1980's.

[4]Eric Mottram, 'Out of Sight But Never Out of Mind: Fears of Invasion in American Culture' in Blood On The Nash Ambassador: Investigations in American Culture (London 1989), p.139.

States' sponsored conflicts, the Viet Nam war.

The period, in fact, marks the most pervasive dominance of what Dwight Eisenhower called the "military–industrial complex," and what others have called the "war machine." The issue needs to be seen as a combination of "perpetual anxiety" with the cycles of capitalism to establish the way in which these two elements feed on one another to secure a *production* which is necessarily both productive and destructive. The analogue to the paranoid system is clear: the necessity of producing a continuity of threat and an inclusive perception which seeks to enclose phenomena within an either/or dynamic—actions, like weapons research, which are abundant in their consumption of energies and the range of their inventiveness; and the destruction implicit in this, where creative difference is selectively denied in a format of use and forced identity.

In psychological contexts, the post–1945 period can be explained as one in which certain changes in the paradigm of forces succeeded one another. From this emerges the post–war concentration on alienation theory and then an uneven consensus regarding *paranoia* as a form of health, or, at the very least, a modern existential necessity, so that in 1966 Thomas Pynchon finds it entirely justifiable to leave his heroine Oedipa Maas, and his readers, in a modern American dilemma. Confronted with the possibility that an underground communications system called "Tristero" is operating in certain parts of the United States, Maas seeks comfort in the binary of delusion *or* truth:

> Either Oedipa in the orbiting ecstasy of a true paranoia, or a real Tristero. For there either was some Tristero beyond the appearance of the legacy America, or there was just America and if there was just America then it seemed the only way she could continue, and manage to be at all relevant to it, was an alien, unfurrowed, assumed full circle

into some paranoia.[5]

The rhythms of these sentences are masterly, pitching the surfaces and tensions of reality against learnt perceptual need. The sudden acceleration toward relevance and completion provides a textual basis reflecting the concerns of the period, and a launching point into Pynchon's next paranoid documentary, Gravity's Rainbow (1973). Speed, in fact, becomes the issue, as Paul Virilio has detailed in his work, suggesting how the increasing speeds of communication and the war machine have taken humanity to the point where human decision is under an impetus which ensures its concentration in isolated cartels, and even programmed electronics.[6] The global interconnection of computers to operate financial markets and weapons systems are the primary examples here. The removal of certain possibilities of decision obviates the *effective* need for fear among the masses and as a consequence *paranoia* is suspended in a constant form of potentiality. Among those "in charge" *paranoia* remains as potent a focus of destructive force within the uses of power as it has ever done. Alternatively, these events have produced a global environment which Jean Baudrillard believes is one with:

> [n]o more hysteria, no more projective paranoia, properly speaking, but this state of terror proper to the schizophrenic: too great a proximity of everything, the unclean promiscuity of everything which touches, invests and penetrates without resistance, with no halo of private protection, not even his own body, to protect him anymore.[7]

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[5]Thomas Pynchon, The Crying of Lot 49 (1966; London 1979), p.126. Hereafter referred to as 'L49.' Because of Pynchon's frequent use of ellipses, my ellipses in quotations from his novels will be given inside square brackets [...].

[6]Paul Virilio, Speed and Politics: An Essay on Dromology, translated by Mark Polizotti (New York 1986).

[7]Jean Baudrillard, "The Ecstasy of Communication" in ed. Hal Foster, The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture (Washington 1983), p.132.

But *paranoia* remains inside this phase of radical overcoding as a means of control, and it extends from the global perspectives allowed by nineteenth and twentieth century advances in technology and communications. Human consciousness and the body have become relays in the transfer of information, connected instantaneously to a truly global network of flows. The issue of time in this process is vital, as Virilio suggests: "All current technologies reduce expanse to nothing... If the parcelling out of territory—of *territories of time*—is envisioned like that...there will be nothing left but absolute control, an immediacy which will be the worst kind of concentration."[8] The idea of the total—total control, total penetration, total surveillance—is consequently brought to an intensity which the rise and dissemination of *paranoia* as a concept, in its variety and pervasion, marks as a confinement and shaping of desire.

Despite the value of their work, however, there is the danger of entering a phase of fatalism with analysts like Baudrillard and Virilio which is in itself a kind of *paranoia*, particularly where critical detachment involves a tacit acceptance of the current situation. Such acceptance may be present in Baudrillard's consistent predilection for phased apocalypse, or Virilio's tendency to include *all* in his critical scenarios. This fatalism is a desire for a determinism which *confirms*, or which offers an inevitability programme written into the analysis as confirmed prediction. Fiction or other forms of creative endeavour can provide an alternative medium of exploration where desire may work itself out within any programme as a more creative dogmatism.

The disruption of history as a singular coherence has, perhaps more than

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[8]Paul Virilio & Sylvere Lotringer, Pure War, translated by Mark Polizotti (New York 1983), p.69. Text italics.

anything else, developed the idea of alienation and anxiety as a "normal" condition in post–1945 American sociology. Rupert Wilkinson's analysis of this tendency—moving from Margaret Mead and David Riesman through to Christopher Lasch—suggests these analysts' relevance particularly in his and their predominant concentration on American character as fearful rather than confident.[9] The effect of a vast and continuing volume of American sociological discourse has not been one of detached diagnosis: in line with their public popularity and dissemination, Riesman and others in The Lonely Crowd (1950), a sequence of books by Vance Packard whose titles provide an appropriate index to the anxieties of the age,[10] and Christopher Lasch's aforementioned The Culture of Narcissism and The Minimal Self, have all explored and, in a way, conditioned a sense of anxiety in public consciousness. From this *history*, readers have been liable to jettison these texts' social critiques in favour of the identity their expositions and ideologies variously offer, as the programmes of their marketing and banality cut in. Equally, a collection of perceptive essays like Identity and Anxiety: Survival of the Person in Mass Society (1960), and the range of anxiety analyses involving all kinds of social activities since World War Two have offered a momentum of diagnosis, mostly derived from the tensions of the McCarthy period, which engages with the discourses of *paranoia* but rarely emerges from them.[11] The

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[9]Rupert Wilkinson, The Pursuit of American Character (New York 1988). See also ed. Rupert Wilkinson, American Social Character: Modern Interpretations (New York 1992).

[10]See, for instance, Vance Packard's The Hidden Persuaders (1957), The Status Seekers (1960), The Waste Makers (1960), A Nation of Strangers (1972), The People Shapers (1977), and more recently, Our Endangered Children (1983).

[11]See ed. Maurice R. Stein, Arthur J. Vidich and David Manning White, Identity and Anxiety: Survival of the Person in Mass Society (Glencoe, Illinois 1960), and also Gordon W. Allport, The Nature of Prejudice (New York 1958); Milton Rokeach, The Open and Closed Mind: Investigations into the Nature of Belief Systems (New York 1960); Abraham Zaleznik and Manfred F. R. Kets de Fries, Power and the Corporate Mind (Boston 1975); Steven Starker,

literature of the period, as we shall see, goes far beyond this, providing a more effective "reorientation of estimates of a culture which shows how that complex known as normal life in a society is in fact a structure of psychopathology."[12]

Of course, the period from 1945 to 1984 in American sociology has been more complex and far more rewarding than this generalization allows. But there has been a tendency under the social hegemony to pursue sociological analysis into academic or populist enclosures where intellectual rigour disseminates or becomes static before the necessity of change. The United States is a culture rife with a literature of advice and self–regard, as a glance at any bookstore selection will confirm, and this has blossomed in the space left by the inability of much of recent sociology to proceed beyond diagnosis or tackle the social problems of the period. The distinction is most evident in a book like Christopher Lasch's The Culture of Narcissism which, in many ways, identifies modern constraints of consciousness, but then fails to open up spaces for any creative expansion which may challenge the hegemony. This is not due to an absence of revolutionary or differential strategies, though that is plain enough, but extends from the rigid posture such analysis prescribes for itself as the correct vision. Alternatively, more populist advice literature in the period offers in its bland discourse the sense to its readers that they are being "looked after," especially as books dealing with positive thinking, diet or forms of calisthenics are inevitably accompanied by exploitative marketing which enmeshes consumers in an apparatus of belonging and use.

The majority of Western populations therefore responded to the Second World

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PARATHINK: The Paranoia of Everyday Life (Far Hills, N.J. 1986).

[12]Eric Mottram, William Burroughs: The Algebra of Need (London 1977), p.14.

War and its aftermath—an experience which Leo Braudy sees as registering "deep in the popular mind the feeling that Somebody or Something did [run the world]"[13]—by concentrating on their discontinuities, their detachment from actuality and power, hoping to seek reconnection. The tragedy of the period is that to seek connection so often becomes the vulnerability and exploitation of finding what is given, and seeing in the combination of chance and design a total force before which submission becomes an automatic and repetitively superficial gratification. Totality for the United States after 1945 is, even more than in the past, the enclosure of a limitlessness inside narrow programmes of power, a compression designed continually to relaunch an ageing dream and a cynical reality whose final countdown becomes endlessly deferred in cycles of production, but whose promise and effects exert themselves on those who live within them. Rather than a negativity, this has been a process of astonishing abundance correlative to Foucault's insistence that power needs to be apprehended not in its repressive function but rather as a productivity. The paranoid dimension is continuously affirmed in Nietzsche's remark that "[e]verything absolute belongs in the realm of pathology."[14]

The late twentieth-century has thus revealed even further the reasons why the United States has been a consistent producer and nurturer of conspiracy belief, seemingly as part of its social fabric. Edward Shils suggests another way of understanding this situation in an examination of American attitudes towards secrecy—particularly in American nativist and populist tendencies—where the tensions

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[13]Leo Braudy, 'Providence, Paranoia, and the Novel' in E.L.H., 48, 1981, p.625.

[14]Friedrich Nietzsche, The Will to Power, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York 1968), p.267.

set up by secrecy, privacy and publicity offer crucial evidence about how conspiracy belief may be formed. Shils's statement about the different appeal of *types* of secret is vital in this respect, and especially with regard to the paranoid component of the phenomenon:

> In the condition of disequilibrium in which publicity destroys privacy, the kind of secret which fascinates and which disrupts is not the technical secret demanded by the *raison d'état*. It is a secret with an aura of fatefulness. It is a secret in which the apocalypse dwells.[15]

The development and expansion of weapons of mass destruction is later noted as the factor causing the convergence of these types of secret, where the "phantasies of apocalyptic visionaries [claim] the respectability of being a reasonable interpretation of the real situation," as Manichean perception manifested itself more visibly beyond the demonstrative confines of "hole-and-corner nativist radicalism, religious fundamentalism and revolutionary populism."[16]

Shils cites three essential elements within the American proclivity for conspiracy belief: anti-intellectualism, anti-pluralism, and a broader sense of xenophobia or fear of any external force. Anti-intellectualism, as Richard Hofstadter has also shown, has been a consistent strand in American social behaviour since the seventeenth-century and has involved itself with conspiracy belief whenever the United States has had to confront complex issues.[17] Technology and economy are the obvious examples, though the existence of any esoteric form of knowledge as a framework of intangible coercion and control is liable to become the focus of

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[15]Edward A. Shils, The Torment of Secrecy: The Background and Consequences of American Security Policies (Glencoe, Illinois 1956), p.27.

[16]Shils, The Torment of Secrecy, p.71.

[17]See Richard Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism in American Life (New York 1963).

conspiratorial belief. Factors of secrecy and seclusion intensify this, particularly in circumstances where "[n]o society has ever been so extensively exposed to public scrutiny as the United States in the twentieth century."[18] Such obsession with scrutiny and surveillance, already mentioned as a primary element in detective fiction, operates now as the essential action of American domestic and international intelligence. This is intelligence of a kind enabled through the increasing surveillance of public and private space via security firms and technology in the domestic arena, and as the most sophisticated and expensive array of technology systems ever assembled in the United States' intelligence, global satellite and electronic surveillance capability.[19] From the use of satellite photographs to "prove" Soviet shipment of missiles to Cuba in 1962 to the American public, to current use of surveillance capabilities as part of armament treaty verification, the thrust is toward a visibility so extensive that logic determines anything covert as malign. The extent to which mass concerns about surveillance are oriented more towards the visibility of all action rather than any sense of invasion of privacy is given in domestic terms by the widespread desire to be under surveillance as a safety factor, as in shopping malls and banks, and even at home. This condition of scrutiny offers dual protection to the fearful: that is, from external *and* internal

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[18]Shils, The Torment of Secrecy, p.39.

[19]In 1990 "the first installment of a 1991 intelligence authorization package totalling about $30 billion passed through the Senate without a word of debate or discussion by the handful of members present..." Within this spending, "the biggest chunk, about $6 billion...goes to the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), a 'black' agency under Air Force cover that builds and launches spy satellites for the entire intelligence community... Next is the Pentagon's National Security Agency (NSA), whose $4 billion budget makes it the hub of a worldwide network of listening posts eavesdropping on friends and foes alike... The CIA, by contrast, gets $3.5 billion, including $600 million for covert actions..." The Washington Post, October 9, 1990, p.A4. For an appraisal of surveillance theory and practice in the American and Western domestic arena, see Christopher Dandeker, Surveillance, Power and Modernity: Bureaucracy and Discipline from 1700 to the Present Day (New York 1990).

threat—the latter case extending from Puritanism into the electronic age the belief that surveillance will deny the self any opportunity for deviance.

Francis Ford Coppola's film, The Conversation (1974), offers an intelligent examination of surveillance and the *paranoia* induced in those operating the technology and the subjects of their surveillance within an American domestic scenario. Coppola effectively pits two dynamics against one another to achieve this: the control of energies and seclusion required to maintain a lead in surveillance techniques and technology, personified in the lonely surveillance genius Harry Caul, and the fact that Caul's work involves cutting into, retrieving and making sense of parts of the soundtrack of existence. For the surveillance technician, however, making sense is meant to be the production of clarity or revealing a pattern or series of links—a conversation—rather than forming an overall understanding of the material gathered. In Arthur Koestler's terms, he should limit himself without question to the holons, or partial holons, he can establish from his surveillance. But a conversation requires dialogue and interaction, and when Caul oversteps these bounds and allows his imagination to intrude in the process, believing that his industrial espionage will be used to harm others, he enters into the destruction of the *paranoia* which requires such surveillance occur. Subsequently Caul becomes distrustful of his assistants, who leave him, and finds his emotional and sexual life invaded when a conversation he has with a woman is recorded by a competitor, and when his girlfriend demands more information than he is prepared to give about his background.

The relationship with this girlfriend, set up in an apartment by Caul, visited by him infrequently for sex and deliberately left without knowledge of his whereabouts, signifies the alienation Caul experiences and makes others experience through his

work. Her question following his refusal to give information about himself—"How will I know you?"—sets the tenor of the film. For Caul, this knowledge would be power to control, as his work seeking covert knowledge for the corporate system demonstrates. In the woman's question, however, there are ambiguities which extend the tension of living under such stress; she may be seeking knowledge to control, but equally she tries to establish trust in a shared mutuality of information about the self through the communication of feelings, activities and personal history. The way she is forced to ask, though, necessarily destroys any hope of mutuality or trust, just as corporations find it necessary to employ Caul's services in an environment of secrecy and economic threat, and it is revealed that Caul's refusal to share his capabilities with friends and colleagues extends from the real threat of predatory competitors.

From this point the creativity which Harry Caul possesses as a technician begins to disconnect him as he enters the tightening spirals of *paranoia*, which ultimately immobilize him before the repercussions of the system he has questioned. His religious belief—Catholicism—is imaged as fertile ground for rigid perception, especially in a scene involving him confessing fears about the harm his work may do. He then begins to hallucinate the murder of others and surveillance of himself, both of which are ultimately proved to him, though, in the latter case, he cannot find the recording source despite tearing his apartment apart. Significant in this destruction is Caul's reluctance to break a Madonna figurine; he finally does so, but finds it empty of the suspected microphone.

The power of the film, beyond the superb acting, resides in Coppola's continual stress that the medium itself, the use of camera and microphone, operates as surveillance. This extends from the existential reality that all in American society exist

within a tension of constant surveillance, as well as that of a produced image in Don DeLillo's later observation that "[t]he twentieth-century is on film. It's the filmed century. If a thing can be filmed, film is implied in the thing itself."[20] The disjunction between image and soundtrack, the use of long range shots and obscured images, and the repetitive replaying and fragmentation of recordings as foreground and background soundtrack, all placed within a labyrinthine plot, consistently frame the action as partial meaning suggesting a system of meaning exists. Caul's *paranoia* is confirmed when he finds himself recorded and therefore part of the soundtrack and a wider system of meaning whose import he can only conceive of as threat. In 1974, of course, in the midst of Watergate and Nixon's paranoid—and ultimately *implicatory*—recording of himself and others, the resonance of this action is farreaching for the American psyche. By involving the viewer in Caul's perception (an increasing certainty), as well as the objective surveillance of the film as medium (which involves a sense of randomness and multiplicity), the film provides a creative inroad into the terror and destruction of individual and institutionalized *paranoia*: involvement and detachment, the ambivalence which *paranoia* and surveillance cannot escape. The final shot seems to be a suggestion by Coppola of a territory where mental health may be retained in the face of such psychic pressures, as Harry Caul sits amid the ruins of his apartment playing his saxophone as a desperate creative gesture to whoever may still be listening.

In the second of Shils's elements of conspiracy, anti-pluralism is directly linked to anti-intellectualism by its suspicion that complexity and/or diversity harbours

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[20]Don DeLillo, Don DeLillo: The Word, the Image and the Gun, ed. Andrew Snell, BBC Television, 27 September 1991.

harm, and it operates as an ironic commentary on the vaunted American social programme of ethnic freedoms and freedom of opinion. Earlier materials have detailed some of the psychic tensions connected to *paranoia* suffered by immigrants arriving in the United States, where analysis focused consistently on outsiders' reactions to the forces constituting Americanism. The need for a singularity with which to define the self as opposed to the other, and to link the self to an undifferentiated mass, has fuelled conspiracy belief aimed at outsiders and has underscored the dangerous dynamic involved in American identity. As Edward Shils asserts, American identity frequently requires active assumption and maintenance above and beyond simple acquisition: "In America, there is more of a tendency to define a person as American by the extent to which [s/]he acts and feels and thinks in a way defined as American."[21] Individualism may be tolerated where exceptional abilities and energies can be harnessed for the reinforcement of American ideologies—as many American heroines and heroes in all forms of narrative demonstrate—but the distinction of active conformity as the quality of Americanism can lead directly to the formation of a House Investigation Committee into Un-American Activities, as occurred in the 1950s.

A poor and relatively unsuccessful film comedy by Joe Dante, The 'Burbs (1989), articulates many of these tensions which incite the terrorism latent in American social conformity, identity and the logic of belief. Its plot deals with a suburban close of houses somewhere near Chicago, and revolves around the suspicions a group of American surburbanites direct at their supposedly secretive and Teutonic or East European neighbours. Bruce Dern plays a Vietnam veteran convinced of the

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[21]Shils, The Torment of Secrecy, p.77.

group's right to investigate, whilst Tom Hanks plays the reluctant liberal drawn into the scheme, all the while protesting about American domestic rights to privacy. A range of horror and mystery typology is used in portraying the dark, shuttered house, its ugly, male inhabitants, and their persistent and mysterious nocturnal activities, all in contrast to the surrounding diverse "American" characters and their domestic spaces. After penetrating the house a number of times, digging up the garden, and finally excavating and igniting a gas main in the cellar which destroys the house, the group are confronted with the fact that they have no evidence of wrongdoing and that their suspicions are totally unfounded. In a frenzied soliloquy, the Hanks character berates himself and the others for their destructive misapprehensions, ending his speech with the recognition that: "It's not them. It's us. We're the lunatics!" The last moments of the film, however, reverse the situation as the householder's car boot is found to contain skeletons and he bundles the injured Hanks into an ambulance and attempts to silence him permanently with a lethal injection. Thus the unreasonable xenophobia is ultimately validated, and the film pivots clumsily on the Freudian notion that an element of truth exists in every *paranoia*, however bizarre, and therefore that anyone holding systematized beliefs *within certain ideological parameters* has the right to investigate anyone else.

Shils's final element, xenophobia and fears of invasion is a major topic in its own right, and one which has been covered elsewhere.[22] But what needs to be restressed is the range over which such fears of outsiders extend within the American psyche, from the cellular level through local community politics and thence to the

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[22]See Mottram, 'Out of Sight But Never Out of Mind: Fears of Invasion in American Culture,' pp.138–180.

national and international scenes. All levels feed one another to produce a social continuum of anxiety which may be turned into fear and *paranoia* by a selection of cues. At a cellular level the United States since 1980 has been in the grip of AIDs *paranoia*, which has been interpreted by virtually all conspiracy theorists and believers as an instigated effort to wipe out sectors of American society. The author experienced this first hand when, on entering Cooper Square in New York City in December 1985, he was given a leaflet, and on leaving he was given another; the first asserted AIDS as the product of homosexual and black community corruptions, which was being spread to morally correct Americans as part of a disruptive and probably foreign-orchestrated scheme; the second that AIDS was manufactured in a conspiracy involving the CIA and higher echelon government figures in order to wipe out homosexuals and ethnic minorities. Neither side were prepared to consider chance elements of genetic and biological mutation as a potential source area of AIDS, particularly where the urge to identify the enemy came from Manichean inheritances. The economic equation enters the scene where Americans are made aware, as part of the enormous structure of the health industry which generates billions of dollars a year, that they can purchase vitamin supplements containing anti-oxidants (like beta-carotene and selenium) which "reinforce" the immune system.

At the other end of the scale, where threat must be identified as part of the rationale for international defence policies, the rhetoric continues in the same vein. The entire cycle of anti-communist *paranoia*, for instance, which has remained a priority of American xenophobia throughout the twentieth century from the activities of the "Red Scare" of the early decades and the appalling treatment of labour organizers, through the hounding of atomic scientists in the post-World War Two

period and McCarthyism, to Reagan's targeting of the "Evil Empire" extending from Moscow in the 1980s, reflects at every moment of its history a complex fusion of American fears. These must be seen in terms of individual obsessions—sexual, authoritarian or otherwise—manifested in figures like Woodrow Wilson, Henry Ford, William Randolph Hearst, Joseph McCarthy, J. Edgar Hoover, Richard Nixon, to name just some of the twentieth century's most influential Americans, just as much as part of wider national and universal patterns. In consequence, a major part of William Burroughs' writing is directed at the fact that "[m]ost of the trouble on this planet is caused by people who must be *right*,"[23] setting up incisive and frequently hilarious analyses of the authority manias which form the core of *paranoia*. Similarly, Stanley Kubrick's film, Dr. Strangelove; Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1963), deconstructs the sombre tone of post–1945 nuclear propaganda to tap into the hysteria which permeates all elements of American and international security, science and technology. Kubrick's portrayal of individual obsession meshing with and logically extending defence systems and ideologies seemed only too true following the rumour that, during his defence briefing and national emergency rehearsal on assuming the Presidency in 1980, Ronald Reagan asked staff: "Where is the button, and when do I get to push it?"[24] If this did not happen, Reagan's statement accidentally recorded before a national radio broadcast in 1984 warning the Soviets that "we begin bombing in five minutes" certainly did. J. K. Galbraith's book, How To Control the Military (1969), makes this point in its own way by attaching to the text, which details

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[23]William Burroughs, 'The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse' in The Adding Machine (London 1988), p.136.

[24]City Paper, Washington, D.C., September 14, 1989, p.4.

the rise of the military–industrial complex in the cold war period, an "EPILOGUE: The Ideas By Which We Are Ruled." Galbraith's initial assertion is that:

> the notion of a conspiracy to enrich and corrupt is gravely damaging to an understanding of the military power... The reality is a complex of organizations pursuing their sometimes diverse but generally common goals...
>
> The problem is not conspiracy or corruption but unchecked rule. And being unchecked, this rule reflects not the national need but the bureaucratic need—not what is best for the United States but what the Air Force, Army, Navy, General Dynamics, North American Rockwell, Grumman Aircraft, State Department representatives, intelligence officers...believe to be best.[25]

But as writers as diverse as Melville, Kafka and Paul Goodman have shown, "bureaucratic need" operates as an extension of personal obsession built on systemic necessity rather than social good, providing an apparatus for the dissemination and enforcement of personal obsession as it may be locked into wider ideological concerns. Galbraith's epilogue reveals this in its sequence of quotations from United States Air Force generals—those men who control the ground and air–launched nuclear arsenals—taken from their blueprints for American survival which in the mid–sixties had no trouble finding major publishers. General Thomas S. Power states:

> But the military aspects of the Communist threat represents just one phase of the most insidious and gigantic plot in history. There are the economic, technological, political, ideological and other phases, all designed for one objective only, and that is the accomplishment of the ultimate Communist goal of total world domination.[26]

A colleague, General Nathan F. Twining found himself similarly threatened:

> I can summarize my views on national security planning into two sentences. The leaders of an organized conspiracy have sworn to destroy America and the Free World by one means or another, and

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[25]J. K. Galbraith, How To Control the Military (New York 1969), pp.26–30.

[26]General Thomas S. Power, USAF, Design for Survival (New York 1965), p.52; cited in Galbraith, How to Control the Military, pp.88–89.

> there is no real evidence available at this time to indicate that their objective has been changed. Therefore we had better be prepared to fight to maintain our liberty.[27]

The most foreboding sense of this "Situation"—to use a term from Thomas Pynchon's V. (1961)—can be drawn, however, from the famous National Security Council Directive 68 of 1950, written largely by the arms negotiator Paul Nitze: "For a free society there is never total victory, since freedom and democracy are never wholly attained, are always in the process of being attained. But defeat at the hands of the totalitarian is total defeat."[28] If one then places this next to Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's conclusions, made in 1968, the progression is revealing:

> Some critics today worry that our democratic, free societies are becoming overmanaged. I would argue that the opposite is true. As paradoxical as it may sound, the real threat to democracy comes not from overmanagement, but from undermanagement. To undermanage reality is not to keep it free. It is simply to let some force other than reason shape reality.
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> ...[A]ll reality can be reasoned about, and not to quantify what can be quantified is only to be content with something less than the full range of reason.[29]

Paranoia's potential within the use of reason has already been detailed, and is further reinforced by McNamara's frequent assertions throughout his book that security policy "depends on assuming a worst plausible case, and having the ability to cope with

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[27]General Nathan F. Twining, USAF, Neither Liberty Nor Safety (New York 1966), pp.275–276; cited in Galbraith, How to Control the Military, p.90.

[28]Cited in Wilkinson, The Pursuit of American Character, p.106. NSC 68 is widely considered to have been the foremost policy decision which ensured the post–1945 global arms race.

[29]Robert S. McNamara, The Essence of Security: Reflections in Office (New York 1968), pp.109–110. McNamara was Secretary of Defence in both the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, a period spanning the Cuban missile crisis and the significant escalation of the Vietnam War, as well as a significant phase of the post–World War Two arms race.

it."[30] In theory, this basis for strategy is *reasonable*; in practice it has been the policy through which a range of irrational obsessions and fears have been extended, driven on by needs for economic expansion and the inheritance of Puritan and Manichean perceptions of continuous internal and external threat.[31] Erich Fromm has articulated the contradictory bases of the United States' defence and foreign policy stance, seeing acute danger:

> in the assumption that what is *possible* must be considered to be a basis for decisions, rather than what is *probable*... The less one knows about the full reality of a situation, the less one is able and willing to analyze it empirically and thoroughly, and the more one tends to think of it in terms of abstract, paranoid thinking.[32]

Indeed, the vocabulary as well as the thought behind the theory and policy of nuclear strategy confirms Fromm's diagnosis and aligns them within the discourses of *paranoia*. Any survey of these prolific materials throws up a range of examples, from the determination of policy on "projections" to the statement that a:

> rational decision to use nuclear weapons is incredible; the potential for an irrational decision to use nuclear weapons *in certain highly specific contingencies*, however, makes US nuclear commitments both actual and credible. US nuclear deterrence thus rests on the threat of *contingently irrational behaviour*.[33]

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[30]McNamara, The Essence of Security, p.53.

[31]Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger's posture statement accompanying the United States fiscal defense report for 1975/6 stated: "Democracies are suffering from their traditional problem—they need an overt manifest threat in order to bring about appropriate allocation of resources within the society to maintain a defense establishment." Cited in Arthur Macy Cox, The Dynamics of Detente: How To End The Arms Race (New York 1976), p.43.

[32]Erich Fromm, 'Paranoia and Policy' in The New York Times, 11 December, 1975. Text italics.

[33]Edward Rhodes, Power and MADness (New York 1989), p.17. Text italics. Later in his book Rhodes cites Thomas Schelling's The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass. 1960), where in nuclear circumstances: "It may be perfectly rational to wish oneself not altogether rational, or—if that language is philosophically objectionable—to wish for the power to suspend certain rational capabilities in certain situations" (p.18).

Equally disturbing is the discussion by strategists of what has come to be known as "perception theory": the manipulation of mass populations according to the psychological impact of nuclear terror rather than the realities of weaponry imbalances, economic cost and political expediency.[34] Within these parameters Edward Luttwak, an expert in the field and adviser to a sequence of US Presidents, military chiefs and the American media, asserts that: "[o]bjective reality, whatever that may be, is simply irrelevant; only the subjective phenomena of perception and value-judgement count."[35]

Reason in these circumstances is instrumental according to Max Horkheimer's definition—the totalitarian instrument in the necessary equation of power: we will tell you what reality is and then manage it for you. This is then reinforced by the organization of desire into mass needs to feel controlled and believe that superior forms of humanly-directed intelligence maintain order. Herbert Marcuse has described Western society as one organized rationally to serve irrational ends, and one in which "[t]he reality surpasses the culture,"[36] and it is at the point where reality intersects with the registering of fears that American writers have been most active in their efforts to construct statements challenging the production of reality as it has been designed for purposes of malign control.

The late twentieth-century has seen no relaxation of these political and economic coercions, and the patterns of populist involvement in millennial belief

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[34]See Steven Kull, 'Nuclear Nonsense' in Foreign Policy, No.58, Spring 1985, pp.28-52.

[35]Edward Luttwak, Strategy and Politics: Collected Essays (New Brunswick, N.J. 1980), p.60. Cited in Kull, 'Nuclear Nonsense,' p.34.

[36]Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man (1964; London 1968), p.58.

identified by Norman Cohn and Michael Barkun continue in related forms.[37] The electronic revolution has built on the forum of pulpit and text to ensure the enclosure of large numbers of people over the vast areas of the United States, utilizing the range of broadcast possibilities as they have become available. In this progression, information broadcast by radio has seen the addition of television as a medium, the latter mutating through direct broadcast to the configurations of cable systems and satellite feeds. The net effect has been to move from the comparatively cumbersome and static printed artefact to the fluid, high velocity elements of electronic information, which has played an essential part in what McLuhan calls changes in the ratios of perception.

In contrast to the hysteria and *reaction* generated by the important radio example, the broadcasts of Orson Welles's version of The War of the Worlds in 1938, and more recently in 1971, TV has altered the *intensities* of response among consumers, and through its greater penetration of domestic space has determined a more pervasive control of mass perception. Cable and satellite networks provide perfect access vehicles for religious and political organizations seeking the manipulation of belief and the sustenance of funds, penetrating households and through a variety of dramatic and psychological techniques ensuring ideological and economic addiction structured by fear. Fear, that is, of the variety of "enemies" erected by the networks—communists, Jews, Catholics, ethnic groups, etc, all as agents of Satan—and, probably of more importance, fear that *fear* will be withdrawn as an existential basis if the network ceases connection. The meaning provided by broadcasts

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[37]See Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium (London 1957) and Michael Barkun, Disaster and the Millennium (New Haven 1974).

as part of a repetitive revelation structure becomes the vital underpinning to otherwise reified existence.

As so often occurs in conspiracy belief, these networks operate as the perfect analogue of the systems of evil they seek to combat. Their status as *networks* radiating from interlinked and centralized sources matches exactly with their view of the evil forces they claim to fight. An example of this configuration is the Moral Majority and its chain of evangelical broadcasting "ministries," with their measured intent to inculcate sets of values and responses by a variety of hidden and revealed means, all encapsulated within power manias and economic necessity. Again, this is clearly a battle fought out in the arena where notions of the other need to generate threat, and where the "phantasy of conspiracy requires the reality of counterconspiracy so that in the end the world becomes an arena in which two conspiracies operate, the wicked conspiracy of the enemies and [a] legitimate and morally necessary conspiracy..."[38]

But while such religious networks enjoy considerable influence among the American population, particularly in areas like the Mid-West, the activities of other, supposedly entertainment-oriented networks demonstrate how, on a wider scale, the affected American psyche may sustain a potential to move into or live within paranoid systems of belief. Programming, and its projection within the ideology of advertising, is just one level of this effect. Beyond the repetition of stereotypical Manichean plots on soap opera and movie channels lies the social manipulation of programme targeting: for instance, a 1990 article on cable systems and their finances and proliferation in Texas reported as a matter of fact that cable movie programming in and around San Antonio, home to several large military bases, consisted almost

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[38]Shils, The Torment of Secrecy, p.30.

entirely of Rambo, Chuck Norris and Arnold Schwarzenegger vigilante–type fare.[39] These movies, with their focus on forms of sanctioned vigilante force against subversive threats, maintain systems of belief quite as entrenched as those fostered under religious programming, whilst easily outstripping them in terms of economic reward for the cartels of their production. This is the territory of McNamara's "management of reality," particularly for a militarized population: the reinforcement of extreme forms of individualism as part of an ideology of the "conspiracy" potential in social darwinism, where violence and force offer a consumptive solution.

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The literary site of this section's investigation will again be the novel, the most prolific creative action to be engaged in locating and probing the coherences sought to bring the total ever nearer the reach of a humanity still nostalgic for Enlightenment beliefs. In these terms, the novel continues to be the prime territory for *paranoia* and its representation. This focus occurs most often as an interrogation of ordering principles and coherence as they provide a functional basis for history, and the ways in which history is used by systems and individuals at any point in the spectrum of power. The range of American authors who have engaged with *paranoia* and its consequences since 1945 is vast,[40] and for the focused purposes of this dissertation only one writer, Thomas Pynchon, will be dealt with extensively. Again, the approach

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[39]Broadcasting Magazine, 11 September 1990, p.54.

[40]Patrick O'Donnell's article, 'Engendering Paranoia in Contemporary Narrative' in boundary 2, 19:1, 1992, mentions Norman Mailer, Philip Roth, Joseph Heller, Robert Coover, Thomas Pynchon, Diane Johnson, Joseph McElroy, John Barth, Kathy Acker, Saul Bellow, Marge Piercy, Don DeLillo, William Gaddis, Ishmael Reed, and Margaret Atwood as representative. To these certainly should be added William Burroughs, Philip K. Dick, Kurt Vonnegut, Tom Robbins, Walter Abish, Robert Anton Wilson and Robert Shea.

will be to try and evaluate the appraisal of the production and effects of *paranoia* inside American culture, as those writers engage with it.

The question that must first be asked when considering *paranoia* and fiction in the period, however, is how some American writers manage to represent and include *paranoia* without succumbing to the limitations and negativity—indeed, the boredom—which any paranoid perception inevitably reaches, given the constraints enforced by a specific production of meaning, particularly where, in Patrick O'Donnell's terms, *paranoia* in this fiction is invariably:

> a kind of logical desire: an attempt to make order out of chaos, to make or see connections, and then to resist mimetically the discourse of mastery. In each instance, however, the form resistance takes to the system that represses otherness merely replicates that system. Even more disturbingly, what appear to be resistant *mis*representations of a prevailing linguistic order homologous to the dominant political order—modern/postmodern gestures of hyperrealism, polyglossia, ambiguity, fragmentation, epistemological magnification—are shown to be cooperative resistances that relegate the problem to the realm of hermeneutics.[41]

An answer lies in the difference between literature and propaganda, where "[p]ropaganda is called upon to solve problems created by technology, to play on maladjustments, and to integrate the individual into a technological world... Thus [propaganda] codifies social, political, and moral standards."[42] In the connected issue of the relationship between language and reality, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf have proposed a model of linguistic use and interpretive potential according to a range of cultural constraints as part of what they view as a model of linguistic determinism. Writing on this topic Whorf quotes Sapir: "We see and hear and

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[41]O'Donnell, 'Engendering Paranoia in Contemporary Narrative,' p.204. Text italics.

[42]Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes, translated by Konrad Kellen and Jean Lerner (1965; New York 1973), pp.xvii, 163.

otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation," and later he suggests that the mind uses language in order to "make a provisional analysis of reality and then regard it as final... Western culture has gone farthest here, farthest in determined thoroughness of provisional analysis, and farthest in determination to regard it as final."[43]

Alternatively, literature may challenge such tendencies with the use of multiple view-points, ambiguity and a concentration on plot as a form of enclosure which provides certain coherences but avoids paranoid obsessions for *the* meaning, *the* truth. The novels to be examined here all draw deeply on the particular obsession for plot and meaning which characterizes American social discourse as it uses energies summoned up by the vast outpourings of desire for security the era demanded as its rationale for existence. In this sense, Don DeLillo assumes the apotheosis of the paranoid and propagandist literary effort since World War Two to be the Warren Report on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, where:

> we are in the realm of literature, in one of those obsessively encyclopedic novels that bore inward toward some central truth, which is all the more eternal for its utter inconsequence. This is the novel in which nothing is left out.
>
> ...When experience is powerless, all things are the same.[44]

The courageous and constructive efforts of the fiction which confronts *paranoia* in the post-1945 period, and retains consequence, achieves this status through a creative accomplishment linked seamlessly to an attempt to provide a critique of the controls

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[43]Benjamin Lee Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings (Cambridge, Mass. 1956), pp.134, 263.

[44]Don DeLillo, 'American Blood: A Journey Through the Labyrinth of Dallas and JFK' in Rolling Stone, December 8, 1983, p.28.

which strive to enmesh all who live in modern Western society. A sense of these fictions' consequence arises in their involvement in the predicate of *paranoia* as a perceptive requirement, alongside a refusal to render experience up to the reader as powerless acceptance in systems of fatality which mark the ideal consumptive for late twentieth century corporate strategies. In these fictions the reader has to *work* and not just consume to establish a coherence, and becomes aware of the processes underlying the potential for *paranoia* simply by engaging the texts' attempts to extend a means for shared creativity and mutual cognition.

The terrain these fictions explore is one where the political links between social control and the strategies of representation have never been more obvious. Again, Don DeLillo articulates the necessary tensions when in Libra (1988) a CIA operative apprehends the intersection of fear and desire organized conclusively by *paranoia*:

> He half wanted to lose control. He wanted a way out of fear and premonition.
>
> Plots carry their own logic. There is a tendency of plots to move toward death. He believed that the idea of death is woven into the nature of every plot. A narrative plot no less than a conspiracy of armed men. The tighter the plot of a story, the more likely it will come to death. A plot in fiction, he believed, is the way we localize the force of the death outside the book, play it off, contain it. The ancients staged mock battles to parallel the tempests in nature and reduce their fear of gods who warred in the sky... He had a foreboding that the plot would move to a limit, develop a logical end.[45]

The task for a whole range of writers has been to explore the deathward movements of American consciousness, to locate "a limit [and] a logical end" without recourse to the destruction inherent in such closure. Their writing, in fact, celebrates the very effort which disallows staticity in the American context, though the power they

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[45]Don DeLillo, Libra (New York 1988), p.221.

analyse is clearly determined to structure ideologies of control which, whilst not static, restrict the dissolution of anxieties from which *paranoia* may extend. And as each writer makes clear, the transition from investigation and growth to manic urges for secure interpretation and total knowledge means a transition from the movement essential to creativity to the sacrificial stasis inherent in apocalyptic revelation.

2. *The stored coded years*
Thomas Pynchon

A characteristic statement in literary criticism about Thomas Pynchon's writing is that "[i]f one were to impose a rubric on Pynchon's fiction, it would undoubtedly be *paranoia*."[46] A remarkable element of the Pynchon Myth has been its generation of an enormous canon of critical theory, all relentlessly pursuing Pynchon's meaning and referentiality to supposed patterns, origins and constructions of purpose. It is an effort of precisely the kind Pynchon's novels remorselessly satirize and expose, moving from a *fictionalized* theory of *paranoia* into the creation of an epistemology by so many Casaubons. Pynchon's own invisibility, his refusal to provide a physicality of voice or presence to which critical theory might appeal, has gone some way to ensure this would happen. Whilst a number of critics have noted their complicities, none has attempted to radically question their own motives as they are reflected by the mirror of the fiction. The academic hunt performed in the service of knowledge has been a *paranoia* of precisely the kind of desired limitation the fiction has dramatized so skillfully.

In this aftermath to a writing intent on providing the United States with a

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[46]Antonio Marquez, 'Everything is Connected: Paranoia in Gravity's Rainbow' in Perspectives on Contemporary Literature, 9, 1983, p.92.

register to its post–1945 consciousness, it seems the only useful contribution to be made is to focus on efforts the texts make to detail an historical momentum some of whose energies come from *paranoia*. For Pynchon's variously encyclopedic novels present an American dilemma in much the same way as the texts already covered; that is, to represent the position and response of the individual with regard to the exertions of power, that power extended from a specific lineage of controls whose manifestations continue to move forward in extraordinary metamorphoses, constantly changing and seeking new energies. The problem of *paranoia*—its simultaneously helpful move towards coherence, but the limitations and distortion of obsession—is given (in a very 1950s historical image) in V.:

> Perhaps history this century, thought Eigenvalue, is rippled with gathers in its fabric such that if we are situated, as Stencil seemed to be, at the bottom of a fold, it's impossible to determine warp, woof or pattern anywhere else. By virtue, however, of existing in one gather it is assumed there are others, compartmented off into sinuous cycles each of which come to assume greater importance than the weave itself and destroy any continuity.[47]

The imposing of a singular pattern (or "rubric"), as *paranoia* attempts, becomes the central problem for a nation of multiplicities which has always proclaimed itself intent on "virtue" and committed to a "continuity" of liberty, yet which is terrified of fragmentation and is palpably obsessed with discovering the threat, if any, contained in unknown "fold[s]." Pynchon's effort, in consequence, has been to gather the peculiar quality and force of American *assumptions*, and to trace their formulation, enforcement and acceptance, especially as in this passage's dense prose style where obsession operates as inclusive force, simultaneously driving and breaking rhythm. His four novels to date emphasise as much as anything else the connections and

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[47]Thomas Pynchon, V. (1961; London 1975), p.155. Hereafter referred to as 'V.'

disconnections between history and the production of reality, developing enormous interlocking plots which pit consciousness against the social and historical forces which seek to shape it. His writing continuously involves itself in the idea put forward by Alain Robbe-Grillet that "[r]ealism is the ideology which each brandishes against his neighbour, the quality which each believes he possesses for himself alone."[48] These investigations have taken place essentially in the structuring of desire for certainty and control where consciousness encounters a range of environments and systems accumulated by humanity to provide security within the political ordering of human perception. As fiction meshes with elaborate and frequently occulted historical research, and *style* confronts and uses a technological era of radical overcoding, the characters and the reader are thwarted in any effort to locate security. They are set adrift in an archaeology of effects whose causality remains ultimately untraceable, as the fiction demonstrates, precisely because of the hubristic flaws in inherited and adapted means used to attempt perception as a total controlling and controlled process.

The description of Oedipa Maas's approach to the city of San Narciso, in The Crying of Lot 49 (1966), illustrates this action. Having been mysteriously designated executor of a former lover's will, Maas sets off within a parody of the obsessive nineteenth century (novel's) action, detection within the legacy plot, in which human origin succumbs to the anxieties of the distribution of wealth:

> She drove into San Narciso on a Sunday, in a rented Impala. Nothing was happening. She looked down a slope, needing to squint for the sunlight, on to a vast sprawl of houses which had grown up all together, like a well-tended crop, from the dull brown earth; and she thought of the time she'd opened a transistor radio to replace a battery and seen her first printed circuit. The ordered swirl of houses and

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[48]Alain Robbe-Grillet, For A New Novel: Essays on Fiction, translated by Richard Howard (New York 1965), p.157.

streets, from this high angle, sprang at her now with the same unexpected, astonishing clarity as the circuit card had. Though she knew even less about radios than about Southern Californians, there were to both patterns a hieroglyphic sense of concealed meaning, of an intent to communicate. There'd seemed no limit to what the printed circuit could have told her (if she had tried to find out); so in her first minute of San Narciso, a revelation also trembled just past the threshold of her understanding. Smog hung all round the horizon, the sun on the bright beige countryside was painful; she and the Chevy seemed parked at the centre of an odd, religious instant. (L49, pp.14–15)

With accessible density, the passage demonstrates the interpretive predicament for the individual given the variables and controls governing human perception and its resources of knowledge. This predicament is offered simultaneously to the reader within a variety of significatory systems of which the writing itself, crucially, is only one. Maas is depicted matching an assortment of immediate and remembered data at an intersection of perceptual effects whose dynamics extend from religion, technology, organicism and semiotics, and whose conjunction operates at the interface of two opposing actions: the extension of a perceptual field, which changes according to temporal flow; and the instantaneity sought in fixed identity and the comparison of discrete objects.

Oedipa Maas's name begins the problem with its links to the referentiality and potential for control given in the twentieth century by Freud's science of interpretation. Her surname, Dutch for "loophole" and Spanish for "more," indicates either disruptive potential inside structure and theory, or simply further accretion. Her passage through the text is thus carefully placed in ironic tension with the passage of anyone through modern Western life: that is, given partial knowledge, yet driven by a continuous urge to assemble epistemological certainty. Correlatively, San Narciso suggests a site of desired interpretive staticity beset by the annoyingly fluid and penetrative access

points granted by modern technology: "it was less an identifiable city than a group of concepts...overlaid with access roads to its own freeway" (L49, p.14). Maas thus looks down on a phenomenon already conceptualised before her perception brings yet more conceptualization to ensure that a pattern may emerge for her. In a very real sense—a reality, for the text, more *real* than the "concepts"—Maas participates through the accumulated baggage of her thought and culture in the process acutely described by Blake in his phrase "all who see become what they behold."[49] Blake is relevant here precisely because his reference is to the changes wrought in human sensory potential by the Industrial Revolution. Pynchon's environment is the site of the next technological progression which promises the reinforcement of sensory constraint: the electronic and military–industrial heartland of California.

What Maas believes she experiences is an urban pattern juxtaposed with an electronic circuit, which the text further complicates by throwing in organic imagery. Nothing is 'natural,' however, in the "well–tended crop" of houses, or in the "rented Impala" which brings her to the city; they signify merely the supremacy sought over nature by an ever–expanding and disparately owned technological effort, and assist in the transition to a programmed perception of electronics and meaning brought suddenly into focus through the smog as if in a camera sweep. Remembering DeLillo's statement that "[w]hen experience is powerless, all things are the same," and in the contexts of Foucault's belief that "individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application... The individual...is one of [power's] prime effects,"[50] Maas's

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[49]William Blake, 'Jerusalem,' Chapter 3, Plate 66, line 36, in Complete Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (Oxford 1972), p.702.

[50]Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972–1977, ed. Colin Gordon (New York 1980), p.98.

conjunction of San Narciso with an electronic circuit, when "[n]othing was happening," takes on an insistently disturbing hue, a quality *in* the writing indicative of the controls to which thought and perception find themselves attached in a technological society.

In this way Pynchon effectively plays on the action asserted by Robbe–Grillet that "[t]he style of the novel...*constitutes* reality."[51] His project is thus to demonstrate how existence in post–1945 America involves experiencing a reality that is always already constituted. Pynchon's stress is on the changes demanded of human spatial and temporal sensibilities by modern technology, and in the changes wrought by electronics in particular, as they determine perceptual extent. The potential for *paranoia* emerges from this matrix of experiential powerlessness, this perceptual enclosure offering a seemingly unlimited range of information, which is appropriately given by a concentration in the passage on semiotics and religious revelation.

In his analysis of the development of sign systems, Gilbert Adair has used an authoritative sequence of studies to show how graphisms extend from and organize economic systems to produce, "with the coming of the State," an overcoding "whose aim is to render debt impossible of discharge," both through overcoding and a deterritorialization of the sign in a despotism of the real. Adair's concentration is on epic form and at one juncture in his analysis alights appropriately for this study on Ezra Pound's epic obsessions, which sought to:

> *include*...[rather than] be *about* history, marshalling the "few dozen facts" which "give one a sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law." [Pound's] model for their mode of "govern[ing] knowledge"? – "as the switchboard governs an electric circuit." Thus these facts, "hard to find," are "swift

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[51]Robbe–Grillet, For A New Novel, p.161. Text italics.

and easy of transmission."[52]

Pynchon's writing is directed to achieving this inclusivity whilst showing the extent to which more contemporary technological influence has produced sets of interchangeable structures of revelation whose "intent to communicate" never provides the fulfillment promised. Those requiring such security are propelled into further and unending investments in controlled information. The carrot is always a sense of the ultimate: "[t]here'd seemed no limit to what the printed circuit could have told her (if she had tried to find out)," but here any fulfillment is disallowed both by the specialization of knowledge—limited, presumably, to some electronic elite—and the intersection of "hieroglyphic" mystery with McLuhan's concept of "pure information," where "the 'content' of any medium is always another medium."[53] Surfaces and interiors seem to promise revelation, but only if a commitment is made to a set of controls and an endlessly deferring system of signification. This commitment, however, provides an entry from the "threshold" where Maas is positioned, into an environment where vertigiousness alternates with certainty.

The potential, and actuality, of *paranoia* emerges here particularly with regard to its involvement with revelation. Maas's arrival at "an odd, religious instant"—and her final attendance at an auction overseen by a "puppet-master [and]...priest...of some remote culture" (L49, p.127)—marks her position at an intersection of interpretive controls. These controls are engaged in delivering an environment of codes for perception, and offer sustenance to a passive consumerism of patterns whose totality

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[52]Gilbert Adair, 'Metamorphosis and Replication: The Civilian Epic of Comics and Horror' in Talus, 5/6, Spring 1991, pp.107, 109. Adair quotes from Ezra Pound, "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris" in Selected Prose 1909-1965 (London 1973), pp.22-23.

[53]Marshall McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man (London 1964), p.8.

is always deferred; offering, in fact, an existence constantly on a "threshold of [...] understanding," a religion of constant accessibility to meaning, but the witholding of that meaning in the manipulation of debt. It is no mistake that the memory Maas brings to her communion with the pattern of San Narciso is the replacement of a battery in a radio. That is, a recharging of the disposable energies of electronic communication whose information is always a recycled "intent." The logical impetus to a point beyond "intent" is given in Marshall McLuhan's belief that the Second Coming would occur in and through electronic circuitry: "pure information," or in Pound's epical concerns, "sudden insight," producing forms of ultimate knowledge.

This impetus is further reinforced by a range of religious suggestion pervading the surfaces and interiors Pynchon carefully reveals through Maas's experience. Maas arrives on a Sunday (perhaps in time for Mass)[54] in a Catholic settlement in which the subject of the will had "put down the plinth course of capital on which everything afterwards had been built, however rickety or grotesque, towards the sky" (L49, p.14). She arrives in a Chevy Impala and sits in her car above the city; sitting, in fact, in technology named both for an African antelope and a hunting cry, preparing for her sacrificial venture into an electronic Babel. Her executive agency as bringer of the law relates her to Moses, particularly as she prepares to descend into the city with images of electronic circuit boards in her mind, as these suggest to her an ultimate knowledge to supplement the force of the law she holds. Law and knowledge thus are brought to organize a Babel of corporate symbol and language into a sense pliant enough for

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[54]An allusion given credence by the reference to Mucho Maas later in the paragraph whose disc jockey activities are described as being as "stylized as the handling of chrism, censer, chalice might be for a holy man" (L49, p.15).

meaning to emerge as inheritance.[55]

What disturbs this project of an "ecstasy of communication," driven toward an ecstasy of revelation, is the phenomenology of perception, the threat of entropic wind–down in the repetition and similitude of surfaces, and memory. Maas's vantage point, her "need...to squint for the sunlight" and her "high angle" amid "smog" and "the bright beige countryside," interferes with her move towards totally prescribed revelation in a controlled environment. That is, the effects of control interfere with their desired production within the parameters of the Second Law of Thermodynamics. The momentum toward meaning built up by memory and structured by socio–cultural forces, however, requires the gesture of trying "to find out" with a personal input whose deviation from norms, or leap of faith, becomes the enclosure of *paranoia*. It is an enclosure where the sacrifice of self is necessary for the securities desired in Pynchon's assertive binary: "If there is something comforting—religious, if you want—about paranoia, there is still also anti–paranoia, where nothing is connected to anything, a condition not many of us can bear for long."[56]

Maas's act of memory provides perhaps the most disruptive action for the control of perception, able to infiltrate the present with differentials from the past. According to Deleuze and Guattari, memory constitutes part of the schizophrenic pole in their model of the tensions affecting unconscious desire under the pressures of modern life. Memory is part of a set of energies "characterized by multiplicity,

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[55]I am indebted to Shamoon Zamir for some suggestions here from his reading of The Crying of Lot 49, particularly in terms of a religious symbolism.

[56]Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow (1973; New York 1974), p.506. Hereafter referred to as 'GR.'

proliferation, becoming, flowing, a breaking of boundaries,"[57] and it disrupts the contrary rigidities of the paranoiac pole, providing an indeterminacy to Maas's "religious moment" and resisting the immediate production of meaning. Capitalism and social darwinism attempt to dehistoricize and decode environments which may be subverted where memory provides a disturbance of reality, or a juxtaposition of different levels of the real, in its attempt to recode and interpret, and Maas's memory sets her momentarily adrift from the control of the immediate. A similar process affects the other nomadic or mobile characters of Pynchon's fiction, maintaining them in a limbo of potential rather than actual *paranoia*, as they seek to connect themselves to their memories and the reality whose surfaces parade before them. What may lie behind those surfaces becomes the primary obsession, and the fiction consequently explores the promise of an unveiling which the characters, trapped in fusions of Manichean and Enlightenment thought, can only conceive of in sets of alternatives: either total meaning, or total chaos.

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As Benny Profane, Herbert Stencil, Oedipa Maas, Tyrone Slothrop and Zoyd Wheeler are all aware, a pattern must be isolated to complement being and battle meaninglessness. In their circumstances, this means a plumbing of their own historicity to attempt to counter the disconnections made apparent in their experience of reality. What the fictions stress in the assembling of detailed and historicized environments is that pattern can only exist in the enclosure of *paranoia* if humanity's various power manias have determined this as a necessity. To make a pattern becomes

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[57]Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Kafka: Toward A Minor Literature, translated by Dana Polan (Minneapolis 1986), p.4.

the exertion of a power detrimental to free and unmediated flows of information.

In a novel like Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow, there is no *conscious* way out: technological progress incites epistemologically exclusive drives, and vice versa, involving and consuming ever more of the natural and human resources available in the global logistical society. Where humanity is enslaved within the power systems of technology and technological production, so it has become enslaved to *paranoia*, a "Situation" represented at one point in Gravity's Rainbow as a synthetic ordering of carbon atoms within the layering of dreams—a juxtaposition of techno-Cartesian forces and perception able occasionally to overcome them—in the Ourobouros image:

> Kekulé dreams the Great Serpent holding its own tail in its mouth, the dreaming Serpent which surrounds the World. But the meanness, the cynicism with which this dream is to be used. The Serpent that announces, "The World is a closed thing, cyclical, resonant, eternally-returning," is to be delivered into a system whose only aim is to *violate* the Cycle. Taking and not giving back, demanding that "productivity" and "earnings" keep on increasing with time, the System removing from the rest of the World these vast quantities of energy to keep its own tiny desperate fraction showing a profit [...] the System, which sooner or later must crash to its death, when its addiction to energy has become more than the rest of the World can supply [...]. (GR, pp.480-481; text italics)

The lineage of American participation is given on several interlocking levels where forms of intertextuality indicate the continuity of forces. A focus of nineteenth century American command and technological intensities, the quarter-deck of the Pequod in Moby-Dick, produces Ahab's paranoid explanation and intoxication where "[a]ll visible objects, man, are but as pasteboard masks. But in each event—in the living act, the undoubted deed—there, some unknown but still reasoning thing puts forth the mouldings of its features from behind the unreasoning mask. If man will

strike, strike through the mask!"[58] The insistence on forms of certainty and reason, and the sense that something *is* there behind the surface indicates the *paranoia* produced at the peripheries of American nineteenth century expansion. By 1966 the change in spatial sensibility has altered the boundaries and the stress is more overtly linguistic to match a sense of dissemination, but the concern is still with surfaces and limits, and what they may hide: "[t]he act of metaphor then was a thrust at truth and a lie, depending where you were: inside, safe, or outside, lost. Oedipa did not know where she was. Trembling, unfurrowed, she slipped sideways, screeching back across grooves of years [...]" (L49, p.89). Maas is certainly outside the command structure, not at the head of a "fixed purpose...laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run" (MD, p.266), as Ahab can claim at the extreme edge of hubristic interrogation. The *paranoia* possessing Ahab which fuels and guards his purpose is closer to that of Weissman/Blicero in Gravity's Rainbow, another maniac eager to launch his combination of technological, authoritarian and sacrificial concerns into an apocalyptically fulfilling moment.

Maas, however, *is* part of the movement: "[t]he act of metaphor" ensures this.[59] Not only enmeshed historically and through language as complicit—her sexual involvement with Pierce Inverarity may be seen as a parallel to Ahab's consummatory dismemberment by the whale in his earlier voyage—she has to function *within* the legal and financial structure of the military–industrial establishment as "executrix." Her powerlessness is figured by her recognition that metaphor, like the claims of

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[58]Herman Melville, Moby–Dick; Or, The Whale (1851; Harmondsworth 1983), p.262. Hereafter referred to as 'MD.'

[59]Metaphor, in its Greek root, means to transfer, or carry across.

scientific theory, participates in both truth and lies, disallowing the firm hold on reality she desires; her potential for *paranoia* consequently functions in response to the "power" of her position in law and its necessary unravelling of coded inheritance. Never, as William Burroughs would say, an "innocent bystander," Maas learns the historical and "vehicular" truth of her complicity as a *citizen*, something given greater intensity in the ordered reflexes of Tyrone Slothrop's corporately-tracked life.

Both Slothrop and Maas continue throughout the enclosure of their texts to retain a potential for *paranoia*, but in lacking certainty, neither are paranoid. Both *are* uncertain, anxious and eager to locate the constituted reality which may conform to what is happening to them and which may therefore give them clues to the force behind their manipulation. Their *paranoia* is not realized as conviction, and thus replicates the plastic status of the alienated individual in totalitarian societies: respondent to the programming of fears and thus able to "act" and move through "an alien, unfurrowed, assumed full circle into some paranoia" (L49, p.126). This process, in turn, is aided by the fluid and interchangeable status of the real, what Jean Baudrillard—continuing the relevance of electronics—calls "[a] fantastic short circuit: the real is hyperrealised. Neither realised, nor idealised: but hyperrealised. The hyperreal is the abolition of the real not by violent destruction, but by its assumption, elevation to the strength of the model."[60]

What may disrupt this organized action, as both Maas and Slothrop illustrate, is the friction of an individual or "irrational" vision, a seizing of revelation for the self which, unless one retains command as Ahab or Blicero does, is determined externally

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[60]Jean Baudrillard, In The Shadow of the Silent Majorities... Or The End of the Social, translated by Paul Foss, Paul Patton & John Johnston (New York 1983), p.84.

as madness and treated as such. Oedipa Maas finds herself desiring this marginalization after reviewing her perceptual options, her meditation taking place as a dialogue with her reflected image:

> Change your name [...] she advised her reflection in the half-light of that afternoon's vanity mirror. Either way, they'll call it paranoia. They. Either you have stumbled [...] on to a network...maybe even on to a real alternative to the exitlessness, to the absence of surprise to life, that harrows the head of every American you know, and you too, sweetie. Or you are hallucinating it. Or a plot has been mounted against you [...]. Or you are fantasying some such plot, in which case you are a nut, Oedipa, out of your skull.
>
> Those, now that she was looking at them, she saw to be the alternatives. Those symmetrical four. She didn't like any of them, but hoped she was mentally ill; that that's all it was (L49, pp.117-118).

"The act of metaphor" becomes itself a pattern, its comparative and vehicular tendencies reflected in Maas's reflection. Surfaces stretch symmetrically and vertiginously away in an endless destabilization which can only be terminated, in the circumstances, by *paranoia*. Jacques Lacan's essay on "The Mirror Stage" is relevant here, where his "*method of symbolic reduction*...establishes in the *defences of the ego* a genetic order...and situates hysterical repression...as preliminary to paranoiac alienation." At the end of the mirror stage, and the movement of the:

> *I* [in]to socially elaborated situations... [a] moment [occurs] that decisively tips the whole of human knowledge into mediatization through the desire of the other, [which] constitutes its objects in an abstract equivalence by the co-operation of others, and turns the I into that apparatus for which every instinctual thrust constitutes a danger, even though it should correspond to a natural maturation...[61]

Pynchon's subversive and appropriate use of a religious discourse structure, the "Proverbs for Paranoids," is more immediate for those unwilling to enter the complex

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[61]Jacques Lacan, 'The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I as revealed in psychoanalytic experience' in Écrits, translated by Alan Sheridan (London 1985), p.5. Text italics.

enclosure of Lacan's theory. The fifth proverb states: "[p]aranoids are not paranoids [...] because they're paranoid, but because they keep putting themselves, fucking idiots, deliberately into paranoid situations" (GR, p.340).

This narcissistic dimension assumes a further level of meaning in Pynchon's writing, as a critic has noted, where Marshall McLuhan's analysis of the Narcissus myth and its reflections on human interaction with technology become probable source materials.[62] McLuhan's stress in Understanding Media is on the etymological connection between *Narcissus* and *narcosis*, and he goes on to assert the accurate version of the myth in which, far from falling in love with *himself* as a reflection:

> Narcissus mistook his own reflection in the water for another person. This extension of himself by mirror numbed his perceptions until he became the servomechanism of his own extended or repeated image. The nymph Echo tried to win his love with fragments of his own speech, but in vain. He was numb. He had adapted to his extension of himself and had become a closed system.[63]

Melville's treatment of this predicament in Moby-Dick is a crucial connection of ego, technology and nature, mythically dramatized where exploration meets exploitation. Reflections of self and other provide "the image of the ungraspable phantom of life...the key to it all" in the opening chapter, before the look-out at "The Mast-Head" confronts the abyss created in prioritizing either meditation or purpose as exclusory actions. In the ensuing narcosis "this sleep, this dream is on ye, move your foot or hand an inch; slip your hold at all; and your identity comes back in horror. Over Descartian vortices you hover" (MD, pp.95, 257).

Descartes has receded in the post-1945 predicament of Oedipa Maas, though

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[62]Thomas Schaub, Thomas Pynchon: The Voice of Ambiguity (Urbana, Illinois 1981), p.94.

[63]McLuhan, Understanding Media, p.41.

elements of his logic remain to torture her with potential certainty among the systems that compose the environment she searches. Maas, in fact, has to face the implosion of boundaries that Moby-Dick locates in its apocalyptic ending, not at sea but inland in "the true continuity" of the "storm systems of group suffering and need, prevailing winds of affluence" which form "the legacy [that] was America." Boundaries are absent because "[n]o one yet knew how to draw them," articulating the crucial narcotic distortion of any creative function with which to face the "hundred alienations" (L49, pp.123, 124); Maas subsequently goes through cycles of alcohol, unknown illness and unlit Californian scenarios. Indeed, at the point where, as a critic suggests, California as "lot 49" is sold,[64] Maas's perception metamorphizes into Yoyodyne's weapons technology: she becomes what she has dealt with, transformed into an extension of technology rather than the opposite action described by McLuhan. As she attends the concluding auction her perception has changed, and she "look[s] at the napes of necks, trying to guess which one was her target, her enemy, perhaps her proof" (L49, p.127).

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Behavioural psychology in Gravity's Rainbow is just part of a totalized sweep of technological progression, but it underpins the entire notion of the novel which may be encapsulated in the question: what are the means by which humanity can arrive at a point of assured self-destruction? Directional coercion is of the essence, as the behavioural psychologist Pointsman seeks to extend and perfect Pavlovian experimentation in a human sphere already ordered in every conceivable area of

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[64]Gerd Hurm, Fragmented Urban Images: The American City in Modern Fiction from Stephen Crane to Thomas Pynchon (Frankfurt am Main 1991), p.311.

existence.[65] Destabilization of perceptual security is one technique, the required conditioned reflex being plotted by a manipulation and repetition of stimuli in a stream of images to fill the alienated void.

The key to this perfect order is the reduction of human sexual drives, biologically the energy of reproduction, to enclosures of repetition where human energies may be controlled at source. Pointsman's manipulation of his obstructive superior, Pudding, follows this course into coercive tableaux where the temporal staticity of pornographic representation isolates the condition of humans so enclosed: Pudding participates in a communion ritual of submission to the point of sado–masochistic coprophagy, his memories of imperial use providing the lever which Pointsman "throws" to staticize him in the controlled distortion and intensification of sensation. Pudding's desire, after a lifetime of authoritarian order, is to be "bound by nothing but his need for pain, for something real, something pure. They have taken him so far from his simple nerves" (GR, p.273), and, as Paul Fussell has indicated, his ritual replays the useless sacrifices made at "Passchendaele [and] the Salient."[66]

Pointsman's authoritarian mania, however, focuses on Slothrop's "perfect

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[65]Henri F. Ellenberger notes the post–1945 global divisions in psychiatric philosophy and practice as being divided politically, so that "[i]n Soviet Russia, Pavlovian psychiatry was now an official doctrine, whereas psychoanalysis and kindred teachings were prohibited. In the United States equal freedom was granted to all psychiatric schools (to the Pavlovian as well as to any other), but psychoanalysis was factually prevalent..." (The Discovery of the Unconscious: The History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry [New York 1970], p.868). What Ellenberger doesn't mention is that the significant developments in behavioural psychiatry, such as the work by Wilhelm Wundt in the 1880s, and Ivan Pavlov's "discoveries" in the early 1900s, stimulated intense interest in the United States where there were at least a hundred different institutions conducting behavioural research by 1910; see John M. O'Donnell, The Origins of Behaviourism: American Psychology, 1870–1920 (New York 1985) for a survey of the crucial period of development of behavioural psychology in the United States.

[66]Paul Fussell, The Great War and Modern Memory (London 1976), p.109.

mechanism" (GR, p.55) of sexual "precognition" as the ultimate enclosure of human instinct. The range of sexual metaphor harnessed by the text in all aspects of rocket conception, production and firing finds its primary representation in Slothrop's *predictive* sexual action. This is paralleled by the mating of rocket to human as the logical conclusion of Blicero and Gottfried's relationship of patriarchal dominance and extension of technology.[67] It is the predictive ability, fostered under a lifetime of industrialized conditioning, which so obsesses the behavioural scientist. The possibility of assured prediction drives Pointsman's *paranoia* on towards the dream of a control which disallows the unexpected reflex and instigates the emplacement of cause and effect structures in a seemingly reversed perfection. To a colleague's complaint that he's "putting response before stimulus," Pointsman replies: "Not at all. Think of it. He's out there, and he can *feel them coming*, days in advance. But it's a reflex. A reflex to something that's in the air *right now*. Something we're too coarsely put together to sense—but *Slothrop can*" (GR, p.56. Text italics).

Pointsman's certainty represents a complex of issues, born of paranoid desires for security which seek to merge certainty of revelation with the ongoing urge toward unlimited production and consumption sought in the rhythms of human creativity. The fiction plays with this idea with its disconnected and shuffled temporalities, describing an apocalyptic circle (the opening and concluding rocket strikes) yet in its profusion of styles and fragmentedness precluding the form of enclosure which would provide the "perfect mechanism" of a metaphor for *paranoia*.

Many of Pynchon's formal techniques stem from those largely pioneered in the

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[67]The symmetries and assymetries of these two relationships have been perceptively analyzed by Dale Carter, The Final Frontier, pp.47–49.

writing of William Burroughs, and Burroughs' "basic formula of 'evil' virus: *The Algebra of Need*" provides the essential context for these issues of behavioural control: "[t]he face of 'evil' is always the face of total need... Beyond a certain frequency need knows absolutely no limit or control."[68] His classic depiction of behaviourism run riot in the figure of Dr. Benway strikes at the heart of the sexual, religious and economic priorities of modern authoritarianism's concentration on metabolic control. Benway's statement in The Naked Lunch after his engagement by "Islam Inc." lays out the strategies and repercussions:

> On the other hand, prolonged mistreatment, short of physical violence, gives rise, when skilfully applied, to anxiety and a feeling of special guilt. A few rules or rather guiding principles are to be borne in mind. The subject must not realize that the mistreatment is a deliberate attack of an anti-human enemy on his personal identity. He must be made to feel that he deserves *any* treatment he receives because there is something (never specified) horribly wrong with him. The naked need of the control addicts must be decently covered by an arbitrary and intricate bureaucracy so that the subject cannot contact his enemy direct.[69]

To Burroughs' definition of the paranoid as the person "in possession of all the facts"[70] may be added the necessary observation that *paranoia* is an addiction to control, or in Pynchon's words "addiction to energy." It is *realized* among those whose grip on power is achieved (but always, consequently, under threat); and is *potential* in those subjected whose use value exists only as long as it *is* potential and they remain unsure of the reality of their predicament.

The value of Pynchon's writing, in these behavioural contexts, is to provide an

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[68]William Burroughs, The Naked Lunch (1959; London 1982), p.3. Text italics.

[69]Burroughs, The Naked Lunch, pp.30–31. Text italics.

[70]Cited in Mottram, 'Out Of Sight But Never Out Of Mind,' p.178.

index of consumptions which recesses behind the physical sacrifice to technology. Gottfried's mating with the rocket forms a priapic thrust towards an apocalypse which exists as a limit, whilst in its wake lies a far greater sacrificial territory littered with individual and mass anxieties from which the rocket draws its psychic energy. The effort to make sense in techno–Cartesian enclosures, as the reader pursues the same enervating task as the characters, uncovers this waste land, isolating consciousness in an entropic environment of radical overcoding.

The reliance on "expert power" among those who control the modern nation–state is a revealing part of this interplay of *paranoia* and its potential amid a range of behavioural techniques. The portrayal of the scientist Pointsman and his relationships with "patients" and superiors provides one level of exploration. Another occurs in the detailed historical analysis throughout Gravity's Rainbow of the corporate global effort to design and use weapons of mass destruction. Magali Sarfatti Larson has located the origins of this development in her analysis of expert power. In this, she identifies two fundamental processes in the concentrations of power achieved by monopolizing certain discourses of knowledge:

> Its effects are measured in the non–physical constraint of accepted definitions, of internalized moral and epistemological norms. It is in one sense impersonal, for it makes the most general knowledge claims; yet it is also deeply personal, in that the individual who internalizes the general and special discourses of his or her culture experiences them as natural expressions or extensions of his or her own will and reason.[71]

At these intersections of power, reason and creativity the actuality of *paranoia* is never far away. This is particularly evident in the circumstances of political coercion

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[71]Magali Sarfatti Larson, 'The Production of Expertise and the Constitution of Expert Power' in ed. Thomas L. Haskell, The Authority of Experts: Studies in History and Theory (Bloomington, Indiana 1984), pp.35–36.

for progress which have marked the twentieth century's military–industrial expansion. For the individual scientist or expert the tensions of internalization are to be borne and then used—by themselves and their masters—as forms of momentum. These move outwards into potent combinations of certainty and mystery which determine the close links between themselves, religion, the occult and the alchemist. Here again the essential element is a revelatory power whose control exists in its extension and restriction, where:

> conceptions of science...merge transcendant objectivity with powerful efficacy over nature in a *knowledge* which is never fully revealed by its technical embodiments. Like any system of ideas, scientific knowledge cannot be exhaustively displayed or codified. Thus, because it remains partly tacit and mysterious, it becomes inseparable from the person of the knower.[72]

In these contexts Eric Mottram's comments on Thomas Edison are apposite, particularly the fact that "it was Edison who made the first Frankenstein film in 1910... The popularity of such media explorations suggests that Americans dream of a fusion between the desiring body and technics, like astronauts fused with their capsule."[73] Discussing the "control, certitude and...paranoia of surgeons," Joan Cassell reports, amongst other things, a Chief of Surgery asserting that "[t]he surgical motto

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[72]Larson, 'The Production of Expertise and the Constitution of Expert Power,' p.56. Text italics.

[73]'"That Dark Instrument": The American Automobile' in Mottram, Blood on the Nash Ambassador, p.45. See also 'The Metallic Necessity and the New American: Culture and Technology in America, 1850–1900' in the same collection. Pynchon has written an intriguing article in which he discusses forms of "Luddite" *paranoia* manifested in the masses undergoing various stages of technological revolution. He cites Mary Shelley's Frankenstein as a classic representation of this tendency, where technology and alchemy fuse to produce irrational fears focused on the figure of the scientist and his techniques. See Thomas Pynchon, 'Is it O.K. To Be a Luddite?' in The New York Times, Book Review section, 28 October 1984.

is 'Sometimes in error, never in doubt,'"[74] an attitude mercilessly revealed in all its destructive implications in the routines of William Burroughs' Dr. Benway.

Pynchon's scientists and experts thus represent a full documentation of an ideological constraint of energies. Their efforts merge a commitment to rigid structures of theory and production with lives lived in an agony of programmed needs. Under such intensity their consciousness transforms smoothly into the certainties of *paranoia*. Pointsman's subjects become part of his "need humorlessly, worldly to use their innocence, to write on them new words of himself, his own brown Realpolitik dreams" (GR, p.57). These "dreams" focus on Slothrop's behavioural functions and use the Pavlovian theory of *paranoia* in an appropriately reflexive vocabulary of obsession and control:

> You've seen [Slothrop's] MMPI. His F scale? Falsifications, distorted thought processes... The scores show it clearly: he's psychopathically deviant, obsessive, a latent paranoiac—well, Pavlov believed that obsessions and paranoid delusions were a result of certain—call them cells, neurons, on the mosaic of the brain, being excited to the level where, through reciprocal induction, all the area around becomes inhibited. One bright, burning point, surrounded by darkness. Darkness it has, in a way, called up [...]. We may have to starve, terrorize, I don't know...it needn't come to that. But I will find his spots of inertia, I will find what they are if I have to open up his damned skull [...] (GR, p.104).

Pointsman's diagnosis, enslaved to preordained theory and a physiological mapping, seeks a singular staticized "point" within a needed Manichean structure as *the* point of certainty. This provides a striking parallel with the obsessions of Benjamin Rush seen in Chapter Two. Indeed, the Manichean structure reproduces itself in a perfect scientific form, provided for Pointsman by his hero Pavlov in the "theory of opposites"

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[74]Joan Cassell, 'On Control, Certitude, and the "Paranoia" of Surgeons' in Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry, 11, 1987, p.233.

which the Russian developed in his analysis of *paranoia* and regarded as *the* basis of thought: "Our general idea of the opposite is a fundamental and indispensable idea which, combined with other general ideas, facilitates, disposes and, even, alone makes possible our normal thought."[75] Such a binary approach determines that the "spots of inertia" need to be located and energized within the conditioned reflexes of behavioural programming. This denies the liberty of a continuum ensuring that motion, and thence productivity, occurs as required.

In this sense, Emerson's statement in Self–Reliance (1841) that "power ceases in the instant of repose, it resides in the moment of transition from a past to a new state" articulates the problem and the effort involved for paranoid theory and control. On the one hand *paranoia* desires to staticize, to render up meaning in a fixity, whilst on the other, and in the circumstances of technological progression, movement and "transition" are a prerequisite of production and consumption until the final death. Thus, "latent" *paranoia* is a necessary manipulative state. However, the staticities threatening with the assumption of the condition need to be avoided, just as, according to Dr. Benway, it is necessary that the subject "cannot contact his enemy direct."

A final and important example of the behaviourist issue in American cultural discourse of the period concerns the work of B. F. Skinner, especially his "utopian novel," Walden Two, written in 1945 and published in 1948, precisely the narrative period of Gravity's Rainbow. This book, and Skinner's application of behavioural

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[75]Ivan P. Pavlov, Conditioned Reflexes and Psychiatry, translated by W.H. Gantt (New York 1941), Vol.2, p.58. Pointsman later quotes from this portion of the text, a letter written by Pavlov to Pierre Janet.

science to social issues in following years,[76] may be seen to extend from Franklin D. Roosevelt's famous "Four Freedoms of America" concept developed through the New Deal and articulated in full in January 1941. In particular, the proclamation of "Freedom from Fear" provided the ironic impetus for American weapons expansion and Skinner's technologization of behaviour under a ruling élite. This élite has since been eager to set the agenda for a new engineered reality "beyond freedom and dignity," as the title of another of his books asserted. Skinner essentially advocates an abolition of the political—in Walden Two the pioneer community simply ignores nation–state government—as part of a post–lapsarian nostalgia. He then bases his utopia on elements of heroic vitalism and rational principles formulated, as he says in his 1976 introduction, from "the great men who are said to have made a difference in human affairs... What is needed is not a new political order or a new kind of government but further knowledge about human behaviour and new ways of applying that knowledge to the design of cultural practices."[77]

From many objections to be levelled at Skinner two come immediately to mind: the first, in the contexts of the last chapter of Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment, is that much of Skinner's rationalism proceeds from precisely the Enlightenment techniques which have proved so disastrous for humanity, not least in the realms of science and mental health. Secondly, Skinner's deflection of the fact that his ideas have been put into effective use by the system he abhors, and that democratic politics *have* all but been abolished in corporate global dominance,

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[76]See, for instance, B. F. Skinner's Science and Human Behaviour (New York 1953), Verbal Behaviour (New York 1957), and Beyond Freedom and Dignity (New York 1971).

[77]B. F. Skinner, Walden Two (1948; New York 1976), p.xvi.

reveals the problem of dispensing with the political—it renders individuals *totally* malleable by the already-emplaced forms of control Skinner's behaviourism desires as security against totalitarianism.

Two statements from the period offer different and compelling representations of immediate post-1945 America revealing that behaviourism wasn't so much an academic projection as a reality. Virgil Jordan's Manifesto for the Atomic Age (1946) fused post-Hiroshima fears with contemporary saturation propaganda concerning what Barry Goldwater later called the "positive side" of nuclear fission, seeing in an economy of nuclear abundance a situation where "the government's principal function would be social control."[78] Mary McCarthy goes further in 1947:

> The movies, the radio, the super-highway have softened us up for the atom bomb; we have lived with them without pleasure, feeling them as a coercion on our natures, a coercion coming seemingly from nowhere and expressing nobody's will. The new coercion finds us without the habit of protest; we are dissident but apart.[79]

This lays out some of the dimensions of an archetype of post-1945 American fiction, the drifter. Pynchon's primary representative of this alienation and discontinuous nomadism is Benny Profane in V. whose metamorphoses, under greater and more structured weights of law and technology, become Oedipa Maas and Tyrone Slothrop. Profane's inability to secure and maintain the emotional bases of his life leaves him suspended and liable to oscillation in Pynchon's calculated metaphor for such alienation, the yo-yo. This stress materializes in Profane's "therapeutic" riding of New York City's circular subway routes, his intermittent erections and a connected

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[78]Cited in Paul Boyer, By The Bomb's Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age (New York 1985), p.143.

[79]Mary McCarthy, 'America the Beautiful: Humanist in a Bathtub' in Commentary, 4, July-December 1947, p.205.

fatalism, these latter phenomena acting as a prototype for Slothrop:

> Any sovereign or broken yo-yo must feel like this after a short time of lying inert, rolling, falling: suddenly to have its umbilical string reconnected, and know the other end is in hands it cannot escape. Hands it doesn't want to escape. Know that the simple clockwork of itself has no more need for symptoms of inutility, lonesomeness, directionless, because now it has a path marked out for it over which it has no control (V, p.217).

The dangers of such behavioural possibilities are in fact avoided by Profane's "inutility," his inability to fashion his oscillatory tendencies to a regular pattern. Regularity is the clear requirement of American social and economic policy, given in the fusion of alienation, force and pure energy in the novel's military-industrial organization, Yoyodyne. Yoyodyne's beginnings stem from a "psychopathic craving for simple gyroscopes" (V, p.227), a technological basis of motion and stability harnessed to provide directional information. It is not coincidental that the gyroscope is the component which forms an essential part of any modern weapons system, particularly in rocketry.

Profane's final appearance in V. signifies an important denial of epiphany. This involves an entropic return from America "through the abruptly absolute night" (V, p.455) towards the Mediterranean basin of the cultures from which modern America emerged, and into which Sidney Stencil sinks. Profane's yo-yo-like momentums preclude *paranoia* as he always fails to connect with the systematizations within which a focused terror could harden into shape. In line with this, his narrative contrasts to that within which Herbert Stencil seeks V. The former narrative is accessible in its relative linearities, whilst the latter moves through temporal shifts and networks of discoordinated research toward the "frayed end of another clue" (V, p.452), a *paranoia* registered in its manic and disruptive splicing of histories toward

the narrative.[80]

In The Crying of Lot 49 Oedipa Maas stands closer to the "threshold" than Profane, her utility bringing her there in an action which dissolves as *knowledge* threatens to bring conviction or realization. This is a modern American Bleak House, in its movement through the inhuman codes and structures of law. Its difference to Dickens' novel lies in its lack of attempted closure—though epiphany seems tantalizingly close at the end—and its stylistically compact, shiny energies, realized from the fluid and manipulable state of American reality and its productive, technological momentums. Yoyodyne, in fact, is this realization, the "great digital computer" that:

> had conditioned the land to accept any San Narciso among its most tender flesh without a reflex of a cry [...]. [Maas] had heard all about excluded middles; they were bad shit, to be avoided; and how had it ever happened here, with the chances once so good for diversity? For it was now like walking among matrices of a great digital computer, the zeroes and ones twinned above, hanging like balanced mobiles right and left, ahead, thick, maybe endless. Behind the hieroglyphic streets there would either be a transcendant meaning, or only the earth [...] either some fraction of the truth's numinous beauty [...] or only a power spectrum (L49, p.125).

Before Gravity's Rainbow and Pointsman, and yet in plot terms a production of the immediate post–war years and ongoing obsessions with behaviourist control, America becomes a land "conditioned [...] without a reflex." It is taken by corporate and technological control to a point where acquiescence and consumption operate as passive forms of response and reflex. The intervening years of manufactured threat, creating a continual "state of emergency"—as in the successively identical arguments

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[80]Gravity's Rainbow is clearly a representative step towards this *narrative*, especially in the opening remark: "No, this is not a disentanglement from, but a progressive *knotting into* [...]" (GR, p.3).

for hydrogen weapons' development, the Viet Nam war, and the so-called Strategic Defence Initiative or "Star Wars"—produces fiction moving toward the epiphanic apocalypse of the rocket strike and the breakdown of language as a medium of response. But here, before that, the binaries still exist, positing *paranoia* as an alternative reality and as a response, if only its comforting certainties can be attained. There are still "zeroes and ones," differences to be used for creative endeavour, but the rocket that is to come bears the serial number 00000.

Deleuze and Guattari's notion of "production" and "antiproduction" provides a useful understanding of the dynamic that informs Pynchon's writing where it analyses corporate connection and manipulation, and reinforces the sense suggested at the beginning of the chapter of capitalism's fusion of production and destruction as a necessary function of productivity. In their terms, Pynchon's use of *paranoia* is the appropriate concept to represent both individual and mass perceptual distortions. They suggest that:

> the capitalist effusion is that of antiproduction within production at all levels of the process. On the one hand, it alone is capable of realizing capitalism's supreme goal, which is to produce lack in the large aggregates, to introduce lack where there is always too much, by effecting the absorption of overabundant resources. On the other hand, it alone doubles the capital and flow of knowledge with a capital and an equivalent flow of *stupidity* that also effects an absorption and a realization, and that ensures the integration of groups and individuals into the system.[81]

For "*stupidity*" one may read delusion and/or conviction where a movement may be made from the anxiety of desire confronted by lack to "an absorption and a realization." "Integration" pivots on desire, and the accessibility of the body—as a

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[81]Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Volume One, translated by Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane, (London 1984), pp.235-236. Text italics.

producer of work and desire—is essential for control of these flows of energy. By penetrating the body through technological and other means "the system" effects control and tolerates and uses *paranoia* and potential *paranoia* as shapings of desire. This occurs most effectively in individual and mass forms of self–repression which are liable only occasionally to an externally destructive break–out from oppositional staticities.

Pynchon's dramatization of behavioural controls among workers and experts reveals this, their various sexual preferences intensified in ritualization and sacrifice to prepare them for their eventual immolation in the rite of technical progress. And even creative opposition is swallowed up, or controlled through dissemination, by these processes. Kekulé's dream, partially quoted above, is thus transformed into several levels of representation. Chief among these concern the complex of American fears obsessed with the corruption of the New World paradise, and the complicit and impotent recriminations of those involved scientists horrified after Hiroshima and, to use Pynchon's phrase, "[c]ooled by then to a vexed engineer–elitism" (GR, p.483):

> "who, sent, the *Dream*?" It is never clear how rhetorical any of Jamf's questions are. "Who sent this new serpent to our ruinous garden, already too fouled, too crowded to qualify as any locus of innocence—unless innocence be our age's neutral, our silent passing into the machineries of indifference—something that Kekulé's Serpent had come to—not to destroy, but to define to us the loss of...we had been given certain molecules, certain combinations and not others...we used what we found in Nature, unquestioning, shamefully perhaps—but the Serpent whispered, '*They can be changed*, and new molecules assembled from the debris of the given...' (GR, p.482. Text italics).

The smooth flows of the dream give way to broken analytic linearities interspersed with notions of hypnotic promise, encapsulating in the meshing of discourses Deleuze and Guattari's question: "[i]sn't the destiny of American literature that of crossing limits and frontiers, causing deterritorialized flows of desire to circulate, but also

always making these flows transport fascisizing, moralizing, Puritan, and familialist territorialities?"[82] Pynchon's creative accomplishment is one consistently aware of this inheritance factor. His writing is always conscious of the *damage* poised within individual and cultural consciousness, and is careful to show how humanity has thought itself into predicaments whose energies extend from *paranoia*.

It is thus that Slothrop fades from the text, disseminated as character from the splicing and dissolving of narratives into a single strand of apocalypse. This extends from a penultimate epiphany fusing patriarchal procreative forces with nature, where "Slothrop sees a very thick rainbow here, a stout rainbow cock driven down out of pubic clouds into Earth, green wet valleyed earth, and his chest fills and he stands crying, not a thing in his head, just feeling natural..." (GR, p.729). The stress then moves on to the break up of language, rhythm and the "natural" where propaganda ensures the constriction of pure, unmediated experience or perception. This time Slothrop sees:

> a scrap of newspaper headline, with a wirephoto of a giant white cock, dangling in the sky straight downward out of a white pubic bush. The letters
>
> MB DRO
> ROSHI
>
> appear above with the logo of some occupation newspaper, a grinning glamour girl riding astraddle the cannon of a tank, steel penis with slotted serpent head, 3rd Armoured treads 'n' triangle on a sweater rippling across her tits. The white image has the same coherence, the hey–lookit–me smugness, as the Cross does. It is not only a sudden white genital onset in the sky—it is also, perhaps, a Tree... (GR, pp.808–809. Text layout).

Slothrop's explanatory potential for the authorities who have pursued him throughout

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[82]Deleuze and Guattari, Anti–Oedipus, pp.277–278.

the narrative has disappeared; they have secured the required technology which renders him meaningless for them. This confirms his position as one of the preterite, the passed over, so that he moves outside the plot, attempting to evade the deathward movement identified by DeLillo.

But this exile is to the alternative death of non–signification: removed as a focus of *paranoia*, Slothrop fades from a referential merging of plot systems which include the Tarot, Gnosis, the Kabbala, and other occult forms. They in turn pre–empt the rocket launch and suggest the multiple enclosures of belief organizing the fusion of control and death to come. The conclusion will examine how the act of narrative, the creation of story, is vital to coherences whose development for consciousness may be non–destructive; here, however, the stress is firmly on the *end* of narrative as plot exerts itself towards the termination of the novel's astonishing inclusivity, very much in line with Jean–François Lyotard's claim that our era has witnessed the repercussions of the end of "grand narratives" as resources of coherence.[83] Death emerges entropically in the multiplicity and overcoding of plots. The production of history by way of this inclusivity becomes the telling *paranoia* of Pynchon's analysis, simultaneously showing how certain and *real* the exploitation has been, whilst in the tracing of clues revealing the damage of suspicion perpetually maintained.

A culmination of this project includes the inevitable "history" of American lineage in Western teleology, and it seems the appropriate place to end this section. Here, Pynchon is deep inside the elements which may determine an American cultural sense of its own process as being paranoid. The thoughts are those of the European

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[83]See Jean–François Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, translated by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester 1984).

paranoid, Blicero, whose extension of his own condition is the entrapment America seems always unable to escape in its recurrent return to teleology:

> America *was* the edge of the World. A message for Europe, continent-sized, inescapable. Europe had found the site for its Kingdom of Death, that special Death the West had invented. [...] Europe had gone deeper—into obsession, addiction, away from all the savage innocences. America was a gift from the invisible powers, a way of returning. But Europe refused it. It wasn't Europe's Original Sin—the latest name for that is Modern Analysis—but it happens that Subsequent Sin is harder to atone for (GR, p.842. Text italics).

Ultimately Pynchon is unable to avoid complicity in the problem of teleology, primarily in his use of allusion and referentiality to produce a fiction critical of the pathologies and desires for security any production of the past incites. The point at which his project involves itself with nostalgia can signify its susceptibility to the processes it creatively identifies as destructive. Deleuze and Guattari's comment on "[s]trange Anglo-American literature" goes some way toward suggesting the tensions that lie within this process, which, in the context of the last phrase of Gravity's Rainbow, move outwards from American culture to effect "everybody—":

> [These writers] overcome a limit, they shatter a wall, the capitalist barrier. And of course they fail to complete the process, they never cease failing to do so. The neurotic impasse again closes—the daddy-mommy of oedipalization, America, the return to the native land—or else the perversion of the exotic territorialities, then drugs, alcohol—or worse still, an old fascist dream... It has been a long time since Engels demonstrated...how an author is great because he cannot prevent himself from tracing flows and causing them to circulate, flows that split asunder the catholic and despotic signifier of his work, and that necessarily nourish a revolutionary machine on the horizon.[84]

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[84]Deleuze and Guattari, Anti-Oedipus, pp.132-133.

CHAPTER FIVE

Beyond *paranoia*?

> I must Create a System or be enslav'd by another Man's.
> I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to Create.[1]
>
> To be an American is precisely to imagine a destiny rather than inherit one. We have always been inhabitants of myth rather than history.[2]

The materials which have gone before as a history of discourses and as a selective literary and cultural exploration have shown how a closed definition of the word, concept or history of *paranoia* is impossible. Any history of the sciences and cultures in which *paranoia* has emerged reveals two intertwined actions: a reflexive set of fears about the securities of understanding in a world beset by the inadequacies of reason, and the destructive uses of power in systems of authority unable to countenance change without fear and anxiety. This final chapter will assess the work of two contemporary American writers who, in their very different ways, have tried to move beyond the problems *paranoia* extends into existence and the creative act. The work of Hubert Selby, Jr., will be used as an example of American narrative reaching a point of implosion beyond the desire for and affirmation of certainties *paranoia* induces in those interrogating a world beset by troubling ambiguities. Selby's concentration on the disintegration and absence of self–esteem consequently provides scenarios in which American insistences on individualism lead inexorably to self–

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[1]William Blake, 'Jerusalem,' Chapter 1, Plate 10, l.20–21, in Complete Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes, (Oxford 1972), p.629.

[2]Leslie Fiedler; cited in Marilyn Ferguson, The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980's (London 1981), p.142.

destruction.

By contrast, much of Robert Duncan's poetry and cultural criticism explores the notion that *paranoia* is linked to creative processes in its appropriation of available energies towards a patterned vision and coherence. Of course, it is as "creative" to design weaponry and proliferate repressive bureaucracies as to live and write poetry, yet the malign qualities given to *paranoia* in American and other cultures need the corrective to be found in the poetics of an artist such as Duncan where his life's work stands as a *real* example of the development of constructive systems of art, knowledge and activism. This goes far beyond the facile notions of "positive paranoia" and "pronoia" detailed in the last part of Chapter Three's history of discourses in terms of recent psychiatric "discoveries" of human potential. In an effort to move away from the shortcomings of that approach, the term *creative paranoia* is preferred.

1. *They don't believe in honest mistakes*
Hubert Selby, Jr.

Causality is never an issue of doubt in Hubert Selby's novels, and this infuses his writing with an appalling fatalism whose force overwhelms his characters and lays bare every flawed impulse and decision they make in their interaction with relentlessly exploitative environments. The notion of *flaw* is ever present, and provides the constant focus of a writing which variously explores the extreme consequences of the more overt modern American scenarios of *paranoia*: what constitutes *health*, narcotics, sexual oppression, capitalist monopolization of energies, and the use of law and power according to the whim of those so empowered—all of which are projected within cycles of addiction to points of self–annihilation. *paranoia* therefore is not the point

in Selby's writing, because his narratives manage, through their ferocity, to reach their limits of plot, and pain, degradation and self-knowledge, where *paranoia* is no longer available as an agency of engagement with the world.

To introduce this brief appraisal of Selby the combination of two analyses of modern American social existence, focused on a priority of self-hatred, provide the effective register of *paranoia* as the undercurrent of Selby's writing. In his study The Culture of Inequality, Michael Lewis argues that the American social hegemony has developed and perpetuates what he calls an "individual-as-central sensibility" in order to preserve and regulate as far as possible the divisions of wealth and social empowerment. This has created an emphasis on equality in a society which offers "in reality, the equal chance for individuals to wind up unequal."[3] Lewis states:

> According to this sensibility, it is the individual alone who is socially significant, who determines what his or her contribution to the commonweal will be, and who is therefore responsible for the degree of personal success achieved. Society is seen as benign, offering up opportunities and waiting to be enriched by those who have the will and the capacity to make productive use of them.
> ...the sensibility has at least one major interpretive implication: as success honors those who have achieved it, failure, and economic failure in particular, stigmatizes those who suffer it.
> ...The individual-as-central sensibility makes personal aspiration a moral necessity and when such aspiration is to any extent thwarted, it virtually requires us to interpret this circumstance as of our own making.[4]

From this basis, developed from successive religious, secular and capitalist ideas over several centuries, the necessity of a preterite or stigmatized sector of the population to buttress the psychology of those above them becomes an essential requirement. It is fed both by direct oppression and the alienating and staticizing force within social

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[3]Michael Lewis, The Culture of Inequality (Amherst 1978), p.4.

[4]Lewis, The Culture of Inequality, pp.8, 10, 17.

systems such as welfare and public housing projects—like those described in Selby's novels, Last Exit to Brooklyn (1965), and Requiem For a Dream (1978)—which offer to both liberal and conservative attitudes the perception that constructive efforts are being made towards equal opportunity.

Lewis's stress in his concept of the individual–as–central sensibility is on the tension of maintaining *self–esteem* in the face of an ever–shifting perception of what constitutes success in both moral and material terms. The consumptive cycles of capitalism and their fluid repetition of fashion and cult systems, within which individuals may engage themselves and register their value, cost money *and* psychic energy, particularly as value depends in the "American Way" on what Lewis calls a "psychological jeopardy"[5] of constant insecurity. All of Selby's characters participate in this "psychological jeopardy" and move from it into a territory increasingly bereft of any meaning available for individual worth, just as Lewis identifies the logical progression for those seeking to reinforce their self–esteem: "Defamation of identifiable others, understood in terms of the psychological need created by the individual–as–central sensibility, is not an end in itself...but is rather a mechanism for convincing oneself, by contradistinction, of one's self–worth."[6]

The links forged here between self–esteem and situations produced by and beyond *paranoia* are not suggested simply due to the existence of a social environment in which defamation and suspicion are required to maintain individual self–esteem, though that seems valid enough. They emerge convincingly in tandem with the ideas of Harry Stack Sullivan considered in Chapter Three, which assert

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[5]Lewis, The Culture of Inequality, p.16.

[6]Lewis, The Culture of Inequality, p.46.

paranoia manifested either as part of a schizophrenic condition or, with greater social pervasion, emerging from the child's first experiences of denied emotional attachment. Selby believes that in modern experience the primary "disease is...lack of love"[7] aligns itself on this process with frightening intensity, and the recurrent predicament in his narratives can be seen to represent the full American sociological import of what Sullivan calls "malevolent transformation." This energization of the individual in reaction to the earliest experiences of fear and anxiety may lay "the groundwork...for the malevolent attitude toward life in general, in which other people are viewed as enemies..."[8] The social environments described in Selby's fiction certainly bear this out at all levels of social interaction: from the violence of marital relationships, the manipulations of employment, and the microcosmic representation of interpersonal activity in capitalist scenarios, all imaged in a disintegration of trust and mutuality in narco-exploitative relationships.

The catalyst in all these areas, just as it forms the basis of Sullivan's psychiatry, is self-esteem, and its complete disintegration is the harrowing result of the ego driven to extremes of self-destruction which extends throughout Selby's writing. In this respect, the prisoner in Selby's novel The Room (1971) oscillates between four conditions in relation to self-esteem: the resonant guilt of childhood and adolescent memory, the calm assurance of the crusading plaintiff, the violent abuse (directed both outward and inward) of "real" consciousness, and the clinical sadism of the behavioural fantasies. The early guilt provides evidence of how self-esteem

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[7]John O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby' in The Review of Contemporary Fiction, 1 (1981), p.315.

[8]Harry Stack Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York 1953), p.345.

may be nipped in the bud, disorienting a young consciousness into the assured response of fear from the certainty of committing transgressions according to some higher authority (the police, mother, God), whatever happens. This extends from and determines the alienating sexual experiences with his girlfriend Mary, and the sense that pleasure and pain must be fused as a singular for orgastic release in the *use* of self and other. This is given in the youthful fantasy which denies the mediation of creativity as prejudice and fear condition sexuality: "his eyes closed tightly trying to create a new image in his mind, one that would give meaning to the more and what he was feeling, but always ending up with the same one, the only one that seemed to satisfy his needs." The "only" image is from a comic book, "a single frame...where an ancient and evil looking oriental had a white woman chained to a pillar in a large hall,"[9] focusing pleasure into sadistic desecration and xenophobia which requires powerlessness—usually feminine—as the bolster to fear.

From these beginnings the prisoner's fantasies of sadistic behavioural routines involving the policemen who arrested him become an extreme logical progression. They project Sadean tableaux to the limits of sadistic and authoritarian pleasure via the inflicting of pain and degradation, and these desires are played out where man uses technology and restraint against "animals" (the policemen as dogs) in an arena of torture and Darwinian supremacy. It is here that the deepest pessimism of Selby's writing is present as it reaches a limit signified by staticity and the notion, common to pornography, of appalling similitude:

> He continued to glance around the room and no matter how many times he looked at everything and everyone in the kennel, and no matter how carefully he investigated every little detail he could find no

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[9]Hubert Selby, Jr., The Room (1971; London 1988), p.130. Hereafter referred to as 'TR.'

> change, neither in the whole nor in any little detail... Everything remained still and unchanging.
>
> Yet there was some kind of a change. Then, as he continued to look around the room, he slowly realized what the change was. It was within himself. The feeling of excitement and rapture...was slowly draining from him.
>
> He could not sustain it. (TR, pp.213–214. Text layout)

Only exhaustion provides "peace and security" (TR, p.215).

To read Selby, therefore, is to be made aware of the destructive potential within oneself and to see the proximity of addiction in everyday life. It is, in fact, to be forced to confront psychopathology as the basis of reality rather than any form of "deviation," and to be taken to a point at which the human is seen to deny itself health. Selby's own words on this predicament are revealing: "I think of it more as a pathology. I feel that my books...are pathological in the sense that they are looking at the disease, they are trying to examine the disease... And the disease...is lack of love..."[10] Taken in context with the biblical epigraphs which open Selby's novels, and even sections of those novels, it becomes apparent that his own obsessions with control underwrite his fictions, setting them in grids of inevitability which extend from the Judaeo–Christian ethics of Western society, and move through the central intersection of ideas for American culture in the last 150 years, the conjunction of social–darwinism with capitalism.

As such, the novels operate as *parables* whose personal vitriol is tempered by a prosodic technique aimed explicitly at countering the effects of the ego. Siting himself in a long tradition of impersonality—one of his favourite authors is Flaubert—Selby believes that truly creative writing is only possible once all traces of

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[10]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.315.

the writer's ego have been excised. And like William Burroughs, with whom he shares this distrust of authorial ego, Selby believes that on a wider societal scale "it's the ego that's our greatest enemy."[11] The remaining analysis will trace that belief as an extreme consequence of the anxieties and fears manipulating Americans in the post–Second World War period, and concentrate briefly on Selby's treatment of American egoism as disease, both as a pathology leading to destruction, and as a *dis*ease functioning in response to the conjunction of social forces in American society.

Selby does not debate *paranoia* in his writing as Thomas Pynchon, Joseph Heller and Don DeLillo do: his writing virtually excludes suspicion so that it enters its own realm of reference in which horrific destruction is as certain as shame. What is most disturbing about this action is that all forms of certainty and blame are inner–directed so that the search for culpability rests in the powerlessness of the individual to avoid destruction. Selby is deliberately uninterested in any liberal sense that humans may be excused, or, more to the point, *excuse themselves*, according to their upbringing and environments. Thus, a succession of protagonists—Georgette, Tralala and Harry Black in Last Exit to Brooklyn, the unnamed prisoner in The Room, Harry White in The Demon (1973), and Harry and Sarah Goldfarb, Tyrone C. Love and Marion Kleinmeitz in Requiem For A Dream—drive *themselves* into situations where the destruction wreaked upon them, even in the most oppressive environments, is ultimately reflexive. That is, it originates either from within themselves or is triggered by their own actions. This represents a most virulent certainty about the potential for self–destruction, and it extends from Selby's belief that: "We all cause everything that happens to us, whether we recognize it or not. That's a cosmic law, which I also know

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[11]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.316.

from my own experience."[12]

Effectively, Selby's protagonists confront themselves in a series of interlocking enclosures beginning with the epigraphs which open each of the narratives. These predominantly Old Testament extracts enforce the weight of a universal and inevitable justice handed down from an all-powerful deity, and determine human response as alienation in a continuum of fear. The protagonists seek to numb this fear in the only way they feel possible: in the location of an experience sufficiently orgastic to overcome fear. Their mistake, as the writing repeatedly confirms, is to allow the satisfaction of ego-oriented desire to mediate this fear, thus constructing cycles of addiction within a pleasure/pain matrix. Pain becomes a necessary opposite to the pleasure sought to eradicate its effects, and as each successive "fix" achieves less and less satisfaction, so more and more intense orgastic charge is required to shift the individual within the matrix from pain to pleasure.

It is this factor which ensures that sex in the narratives is so often a source of pain administered under the aegis of power. Driven to murder someone by pushing them under a subway train after a succession of sexual and kleptomaniac desires prove insufficient within his matrix of control, Harry White returns home in The Demon "as if he were being moved by some outside force or control, as if weirdly detached from himself."[13] Emotionally emptied by the experience and physically emptied by a night of sickness—a recurrent Selby image is vomiting as a violent racking and emptying of the body, a repetitive purging seeking reconnection to what David Shapiro called "Autonomy and Rigid Character"—he then makes love to his wife: "He felt and

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[12]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.315.

[13]Hubert Selby, Jr., The Demon (1973; London 1977), p.270. Hereafter referred to as 'TD.'

experienced each and every move with heightened sensitivity and pleasure that were magnified by the sensation of fear, a fear of infinite power, a fear that forced him on and on long after desire had melted and flowed from his body" (TD, p.272).

Transgression becomes an inextricable part of the orgastic act likely to weld fear and pleasure, and ultimately bring on the confrontation which each protagonists' ego desires beyond its own self-omniscience. Whether it is narcotic or sexual disembodiment, the urge is to merge the self with the infinite power which pervades the narratives as an objectifying force. In their efforts to deal with this the protagonists objectify themselves in a manner occasionally reinforced by Selby's strategic shifts between first and third person narrative. In Last Exit To Brooklyn Tralala prostitutes herself to the point of becoming gang-raped detritus on an empty lot, while Harry Black seeks solace in homosexual encounters until he winds up similarly broken and used. When making homosexual love for the first time Harry fantasizes his wife's sadistic torture, combining pleasure and pain in a toxic fusion and generating the voyeuristic detachment of fantasy and pornography, and their fleeting fulfillments. The response to this emerges in the narrative in Harry's bemusement at his own self-detachment and objectification, which is imaged essentially as a detachment and then reconnection to phallocentric power. Fantasizing his wife's dismemberment and disembowelling by giant penises:

> ...Harry sat watching, laughing his laugh and groaning, groaning with pleasure and then he heard the groan, heard it not only from inside, but heard it enter his ear from outside...
> ...Harry looked at his prick hanging half rigidly between his legs. It hypnotized him and he stared at it for a moment knowing it was his yet not recognising it, as if he had never seen it before yet knowing he had... He looked at his penis again and the strangeness disappeared. He wondered briefly about his thoughts of a moment ago. He couldnt

remember them. He felt good.[14]

In The Room this process achieves a frightening intensity in the protagonist's obsessive return to a pimple on his cheek, driving infection into massive inflammation as the narrative unfolds. This conveys a brutally corporeal sense of external flaw fed internally by *dis*ease whose momentum is hastened by a consistent human return to and obsession with infection. Similarly, Harry Goldfarb's arm, turned gangrenous by intravenous needle infection, causes his and Tyrone C. Love's downfall as the interface breaks down between his body and the needed narcotic substance in Requiem For A Dream. In that novel, however, it is Harry's mother Sara who represents the most complete sense of personal objectification, moving into tightening spirals of amphetamine addiction to shape her body according to fantasy and media images: "After two weeks on the pills Sara was accustomed to their effects. She almost enjoyed the grinding of *the* teeth, and even if it annoyed her a little from time to time it was worth the slight inconvenience to feel so good and to see *the* weight dropping off."[15] At the end of the narrative she becomes the site of medical objectification, undergoing force-feeding and shock therapy within a system where caring diagnosis founders under the egotistical clashes of doctors.

Michel Foucault's important essay "A Preface to Transgression" offers some useful suggestions here with regard to the action of transgression and its links to sexuality and power in a world "where God is absent, and where all of our actions are addressed to this absence in a profanation which at once identifies it, dissipates it,

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[14]Hubert Selby, Jr., Last Exit To Brooklyn (London 1970), pp.205-206. Hereafter referred to as 'LEB.'

[15]Hubert Selby, Jr., Requiem For A Dream (1978; London 1979), p.133. My italics. Hereafter refrred to as 'RD.'

exhausts itself in it, and restores it to the empty purity of its transgression."[16] Selby's writing actively seeks an exhaustion in the protagonists' profanation of themselves, their extension of themselves beyond any sense that they might remain inside the limit of any value. They *use* themselves in a disallowing of choice, desiring connection with the ultimate power they fantasize as existent in the void to be found within themselves. That power is total need, however, and an involvement in which inevitably becomes addiction to control and thence a torturous self-consumption.

The rhythms and speeds of Selby's narratives ensure the material reflection of this process through language, accelerating into long unbroken intensities where orgastic fulfillment and representation of the transgressive are attempted. But as Foucault intimates, the use of the language of sexuality has ensured that totalities of this kind cannot be attained, that the discursive medium disallows the transcendental leap it desires: "On the day that sexuality began to speak and to be spoken, language no longer served as a veil for the infinite; and in the thickness it acquired on that day, we now experience finitude and being. In its dark domain, we now encounter the absence of God, our death, limits, and their transgression."[17]

Like Georges Bataille, whose writing forms the analytical focus of Foucault's essay, Selby's transgressive action is brought incessantly to bear on the conjunction of religion and sexuality as the fruitful territory for the transgression of limits. The final words uttered by Harry Black in Last Exit To Brooklyn are a famous example; having been fired from his post as union man and strike organizer, and having been

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[16]Michel Foucault, "A Preface to Transgression" in Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews, translated by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, (Ithaca 1977), p.31.

[17]Foucault, 'A Preface to Transgression,' p.51.

rejected by all his homosexual acquaintances due to lack of money, Harry molests a boy in his neighbourhood and is savagely beaten by local toughs. The profanity and transgression he then articulates, heard only inside his consciousness, indicates the underlying desire for power beyond shame and powerlessness: having attempted to fellate the boy and having been beaten and left hanging from a fence in cruciform shape, Harry's words extend a reflexive condemnation into the void where neither God exists nor empowerment through possession of the phallus has been allowed: "He yelled again. He heard the sound loud inside his head, GOD O GOD, he yelled but no sound came from his mouth. He heard his voice loud in his head but only a slight gurgle came from his lips. GOD GOD YOU SUCK COCK" (LEB, p.238. Text layout).

Both The Room and The Demon feature similarly conclusive actions where the transgression of religious order leads to silence. The prisoner in The Room fantasizes a violent sexual encounter in a church which is intercut with the Lord's Prayer and imaged as a forcible communion rite. Taking place as a masturbatory fantasy, and thus a profane and wasteful spilling of seed, the fantasy finishes in a repetitive and silent yelling of "AMEN," after which: "For a moment he felt as if he would drown in his own juice as he heard words gurgling in his throat. Eventually they fell from his lips. o god. o god. no. no..." (TR, pp.248–249. Text layout). "AMEN," of course, means "so let it be," but this is a long way from Kurt Vonnegut's "So it goes," and thus the protagonists who reach such limits ultimately acquiesce to the void they face, torn in their addictive cycles between affirmation and negation until they realize in their silence and destruction the only forceful sense of their predicament.

In line with this, Harry White in The Demon does "drown" after going beyond

fantasy to murder Cardinal Letermen as he serves Mass in New York's St Patrick's Cathedral on Easter Sunday, "this day of Resurrection" (TD, p.305). He moves from the unfulfilling cycles of the Protestant work ethic into an inexorable frenzy of destruction aimed at Catholic symbolism and the 'representative' of God on earth:

> Time moved slowly but inexorably. But time was meaningless... [Harry] had arrived ahead of time. There was a time when the schedule, that timetable of achievement, had been everything, but then as he achieved his various goals, they became increasingly meaningless, and still he pushed and pushed, but where? He had arrived. Where now? Where? (TD, p.304)

All through the narrative Harry White finds himself thwarted and distorted by the mutual yet irreconcilable rhythms of success and his addiction, the latter an internalized time always eventually gaining priority over his progression through the trappings of capitalist success: the well-paid job, the wife and children, the house in a wealthy suburb. Describing the Mass, the narrative once again sets the onrush of transgressive desire against the temporal measure of ritual, providing further formal representation of a lacerating synchronic divergence:

> ...and all he could do was stay within himself and become more and more a part of his disease
>
> > *...To him all the prophets testify,*
> > *saying that everyone who believes*
> > *in him has forgiveness of sins*
> > *through his name.—This is the word*
> > *of the Lord*
> > **Thanks be to God.**
>
> and clutch more tightly to his package and his gut and bend a little more under the weight of his own hopelessness and become more and more appalled at what was about to happen and unable to find the means to yell out, No, and retreat... (TD, pp.306–307. Text layout)

What happens is another crucifixion merged with disconnected orgasm and silenced utterance, only this time it is Harry who urges the impaled Cardinal to "SAY IT, SAY

IIITTTTTTTTTT..." (TD, p.308), murdering the answer to a question which has meaning only for and "within himself."

The predicament is ultimately that of complete egotistical self–absorption, and a textual entrapment in what Foucault calls language's "dark domain." For it is there in Selby's writing that the ego internalizes everything until self–annihilation occurs aligned with the desired self–apocalypse of absolute truth. Thus, stumbling away from his assassination of the Cardinal, Harry White takes a ferry out into New York harbour and performs a self–administered, engulfing crucifixion:

> ...he stretched his arms out to the side like a bird and leaned forward and slowly, slowly, slowly moved forward and down and split his crosslike reflection and shadow as he suddenly hit the cold water...and the force of the tide and the undertow swept him deeper and deeper into the cold darkness and for the briefest of moments he stopped struggling and hung motionless as the truth of his life was suddenly thrust in front of him and he stared at this truth for a brief and infinite moment then opened his mouth in a scream but no sound came out... (TD, pp.311–312)

In common with some of the passages quoted in Chapter Four from The Crying of Lot 49, a narcissistic action is primary, though here it takes the violent and necessary form of shattering the reflected image "and shadow" in the final orgy of self–hatred. Chronologically prior to The Demon, The Room opens with a narcissistic indeterminacy: "He was conscious of the dark stillness in the corridor. He knew there was nothing to be seen, yet he continued to stare thru the reflection of his face in the small window" (TR, p.11), which then moves immediately into the lengthy, narrative–long assault on the image of the self via the pimple. The thrust of The Demon, as its title suggests, is towards the diabolic, and the culmination of that thrust is implosive, causing the destruction simultaneously of self and other—other both as reflected image and "shadow"/devil. In the end it is the only way to achieve what the narrative sets

out at its beginning as the obsessive problem for Harry White: "security. Not the security of the umbilical cord, but security from himself" (TD, p.7).

Selby has said about The Demon "I am obviously attacking the American Dream,"[18] and it is notable that the novel's finale should take place at the point of entry where so many immigrants arrived to take up the challenge of the New World and its individualistic opportunities. Harry White presumably leaps off the Staten Island Ferry which passes close to Ellis Island, enacting an implosive finale to the enclosure of the narrative as a shattering of the American Dream, particularly as that Dream operates as a perverse reflection of reality. Harry constructs and is enclosed by an imprisoning system which extends beyond *paranoia* from the beginning of the narrative—its enclosing epigraphs—and his assumption of an American value system as the index of his life. His sensibility emerges in the friction of these two systems: he is part of a relentless fatalism prefigured in the quotation from James 1:12–15, and he participates fully in the contradictions which make up capitalist values. On the one hand, Harry enters a causality which continuously measures progress according to the accumulation of material possessions, and the 'perks' of abrogating Judaeo–Christian law and loyalties (as in executive use of prostitutes); on the other, he grapples with the spiritual void this abrogation creates, specifically as it is given in terms of the classic enclosure of self–repression.

The target of this rage is the ego, a virulent self–hatred never at a loss for certainty or evidence in its reflexive posture, whilst in the background lie the drives of American culture which lead to the creation of this mode of consciousness. Gilbert Sorrentino has noted how Selby's writing replays the Frankenstein myth of creation

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[18]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.321.

and self-destruction in an American context, and it is clear from each of the novels that their narratives operate as a hunting down of the ego in a succession of its deplorable recesses. The hunt is as responsible for the protagonists' lack of choice as is their failure to break out of the cycle of their self-destruction. They are written into a thrall for power whose exposure reveals a damage made potent by the narratives' own susceptibility to this thrall. Or, as in Eric Mottram's words, Selby cannot and does not stand detached from the subject of his writing for it "contains the suggestion of a *direction* of cure, a context for violence which is so authoritarian in itself as to be, by his own evidences, invalid."[19]

Selby's narratives ultimately concentrate on a determinism so intense that it intersects with the outer fringes of individualism, bridging the space between the denial of freedom of choice, in a universe of unmediated causality, and will as the determining factor in existence. Selby has stated categorically: "There is no plot [in my fiction]... Plots are false things. Plots aren't real. And in an absolute sense, I'm involved with reality. Plots are man-made constructions."[20] But Selby's writing contradicts this, becoming a pure representation of the American plot of enclosure and desired apocalypse, an *absolute reality* of American will towards the death prefigured by DeLillo in all plots.

A further way in which Selby's writing compares with the work of Thomas Pynchon is in their parallel interest in the preterite, the disinherited destined for oblivion. But whereas Pynchon's preterite attempt to plot themselves *into* significance

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[19]Eric Mottram, 'Free Like the Rest of Us: Violence and Despair in Hubert Selby's Novels' in The Review of Contemporary Fiction, 1 (1981), p.363.

[20]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.328.

and connection to the systems that surround and invade them, Selby's protagonists undergo traumatic *separation* in an extension into their own systems, seeking security in the engineering of their own fatality. The narratives are scathing about the oedipalization of plot structures in the twentieth century, simultaneously directing satire at Freudian interpretation (most obviously in Requiem For a Dream), and reducing parental influence in most of the narratives simply by pitting it against the overwhelming destruction of alternative systems of control. Families are seen as enclosures in which love is inevitably subsumed under the efforts required to gain and use power, love becoming a nostalgic reference to a point before empowerment matters. In this sense, the absence of fathers in the family units represented in The Room and Requiem For a Dream is vital, placing the stress firmly on the characters as active producers of themselves in relation to their social and economic surroundings. Again, the urge is to ensure that no excuses exist, excluding distraction from the terrifying swell of self-hatred which energizes the claustrophobic momentums of the writing.

In fact, Selby's writing may be seen as an American fictional parallel to ideas put forward by Wilhelm Reich in works such as The Mass Psychology of Fascism (1933) and The Sexual Revolution (1936). Although Selby's novels grant less importance than Reich does to the effects of authoritarian family structures, and Selby writes firmly in (and in reaction to) the American tradition of individualism, both writers are concerned to trace the connections between sexuality, the inhibition of orgastic release, religion, and their conjunction in the production of fascism. The fantasized crusading plaintiff in The Room sets out to reveal and punish "a creeping neo-fascism" (TR, p.17) in the society which punishes him, and the range of

consciousnesses the narrative represents offer a striking index in the evolution of fascist obsessions. Starting from early sexual inhibition, linked to mother and church, the power and violence manias which then ensue reinforce Reich's compelling statement that:

> people who are incapable of release must begin to sense sexual excitations as torturous, burdensome, destructive. In fact, sexual excitation is destructive and torturous if it is not allowed to achieve release. Thus, we see that the religious conception of sex as an annihilating, diabolical force, predisposing one for final doom, is rooted in actual physical processes.[21]

Selby's writing never flinches from describing the "actual physical processes" involved in the violence to self and others caused by the inability to find sexual release. The Demon is a catalogue of precisely this litany of violence, a picaresque apocalypse which combines a search for sexual release with the insatiabilities of capitalist drives. Harry White's sexual adventures lack the adolescent history of inhibition which underlies The Room, but it is clear that Harry searches for a release offering escape from what Reich calls "mystic distortion."[22] Such mysticism operates as part of social power—Reich's example is Nazi race theory—and is allied for control with the mystery of religion. It is through an excess of transgression that Harry White believes he can reach a demystification of the power that exerts itself within him, but all he succeeds in doing is ensuring the power of his ego's self-destructiveness and tightening the impossibility of release.

At this edge of extreme power self-esteem's absence is seen to be directly related to a crucial factor for mental health, and the one which renders Selby's art so

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[21]Wilhelm Reich, The Mass Psychology of Fascism, translated by Vincent R. Carfagno (Harmondsworth, Middlesex 1970), pp.180-181.

[22]Reich, The Mass Psychology of Fascism, p.24.

terrifying in its implications. This is very simply the death of experiential possibility in the triumph of social-darwinist ideology, and the inevitability that fascist obsessions pervade all levels of consciousness ultimately denying variation, alternatives or rhythms other than those linked to irrational power manias. But only fantasy can maintain self-esteem in circumstances where "'fascism' is the basic emotional attitude of the suppressed man of our authoritarian machine civilization and its mechanistic-mystical conception of life."[23] Thus Selby's comment on The Room that "[t]he price of hating others is loving yourself less"[24] is both accurate and reflexive: the appalling charge Selby's art manifests consequently leaves him open to the accusation of misanthropy traditionally levelled at great satirists, although both satire and *paranoia* as forms of creative energy are present only as the remotest of cultural traces.

2. Robert Duncan and *creative paranoia*

> When a man's life becomes totally so informed that every bird and leaf speaks to him and every happening has meaning, he is considered to be *psychotic*. The shaman and the inspired poet, who take the universe to be alive, are brothers germane of the mystic and paranoiac.[25]

So Robert Duncan opens his essay "The Truth and Life of Myth," which carries out a powerful indictment of the efforts in modern rationalistic cultures to exclude the truth inherent in myth, and to tie poetry and thought to the limitations of established convention. Indeed, the title of Duncan's book in which the essay was

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[23]Reich, The Mass Psychology of Fascism, p.15.

[24]O'Brien, 'An Interview with Hubert Selby,' p.322.

[25]Robert Duncan, 'The Truth and Life of Myth' in Fictive Certainties (New York 1985), p.2. Text italics. Hereafter referred to as 'TLM.'

ultimately collected, Fictive Certainties, sets out the thrust of an argument ranging throughout his writing and poetry concerning the proportions of and need for essential fictions in the health and life of the mind and body in late twentieth-century America. This argument, and the ways it manifests itself in the work of Duncan will provide the bases on which this dissertation will organize itself towards a conclusion—though, in imitation of that work, not *close*, but remain open.

Duncan has been chosen because of his relative contemporaneity, and because he deliberately and frequently confronted *paranoia* in his work, apprehending it both as a necessary part of the creation of poetry and as a political condition manipulated in particular forms in the modern nation state. Duncan lived and wrote through the Great Depression, World War Two and its aftermath, and the Cold War—these latter periods termed variously the "Age of Anxiety" and the "Age of Paranoia"—and developed an individual poetics which extended a *creative paranoia* in response. This poetics differed radically from the fashionable and conventional poetics of the same period sanctioned by the establishment and academy, particularly what has come to be called "Confessional Poetry" and the "New Criticism." The action in these movements came in part from a neurotic need to recover the traces of a disseminated self and impotently substantiate the ego as a basis for anxiety and obsession with meaning inside "texts."

Duncan also presents a more radically engaged forum for political realization where *paranoia* is concerned than the efforts made in the American novel of the same period. There, two predominant exposures of and resistances to *paranoia* extend themselves against political coercions: the uses of detail in terms of documentary histories giving space to the information available, parallel to and exposing manic

paranoid gatherings of predetermined data; and the extensive uses of satire as a deflation or explosion of *paranoia*, whose closed systems cannot contain or attempt to deny the releases satiric humour detonates (and where Freud's excavations of the concealed truths in jokes and humour provide an example of an expansive technique of revelation).[26] Writers like Pynchon and Heller provide variously chilling and hilarious encyclopedias of American *paranoia* which demonstrate that "just as paranoia has much in common with the aesthetic completeness of narrative order, so narrative may gather coherence and strength from a paranoid vision."[27] Their fictional strategies edge towards what will be considered here in terms of the open forms and fictive certainties of Duncan's poetics, yet their narratives ultimately cannot resist the implications of closure inherent in DeLillo's reference to the tendency in plot to "move toward death,"[28]—or, indeed, a cultivated discourse with the entropic equilibriums associated with cultural needs for destructive forms of revelation and apocalypse. In contradistinction to this are the continual efforts within the poetics Duncan variously espoused towards patterned forms of revelatory disequilibrium, in line with his drawing on "Schrödinger's sense that the principle of life lies in its evasion of equilibrium."[29]

Like most Americans, Duncan had to deploy *paranoia* at a basic existential and

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[26]See Sigmund Freud, Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious (1906) in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works (London 1960), Volume VIII.

[27]Leo Braudy, 'Providence, Paranoia and the Novel' in E.L.H. (48), 1981, p.623.

[28]Don DeLillo, Libra (New York 1988), p.221. Edward Jayne sees this scenario as one of tension "between the paranoid reassurances afforded by plot and the polydimensional (and polymorphous) truth of human experience which continues to be expressed by means of resistance against plot's impetus towards resolution." Edward Jayne, 'The Dialectics of Paranoid Form' in Genre, 11 (1978), p.147.

[29]Robert Duncan, 'Towards an Open Universe' in Duncan, Fictive Certainties, p.87.

political level as a survival mechanism through a period of crises and collapses of the American state in its post–(and continuing)–Civil War conditions. Duncan's experience spanned the destructions of the Great Depression, McCarthyism, civil rights activism, the Vietnam war, the Kent State murders, and the explosion of crime in late twentieth–century American urban and other environments. In particular, he was avowedly deviant in his homosexuality against the paranoid sexual normativeness of much of the American cultural scene of his lifetime, beginning with his extremely important essay, 'The Homosexual in Society' (1944).[30] In these and many other parts of his life and poetry, Duncan engaged with a crucial understanding for any contemporary perception of *paranoia* concerning the possible dimensions of the self in the social and political conditions emerging after 1945. These have been put succinctly by Robert Jay Lifton in his discussions of a "blurring of perceptions of where self begins and ends," and where he cites the American critic Theodore Solotaroff, who states that "there is no such thing as even a relatively fixed sense of self, ego or identity—rather, there is only the subjective mind in motion in relationship to that which it confronts."[31] The fears and anxieties generated about the atomisation of the self before state totalitarianism and nuclear weapons have created the ironic conditions of greater *paranoia* about self–autonomy just as that self has been forced, in Lifton's terms, into more convoluted Protean actions. Pynchon's characterization of Tyrone Slothrop in Gravity's Rainbow is a primary fictional response to this, yet the

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[30]Robert Duncan, 'The Homosexual in Society' in Politics, 1 (1944), pp.209–211. Unfortunately, lack of space precludes an exploration of the links between Duncan's homosexuality, his poetry, and the homosexual elements within a Freudian theory of *paranoia*, if, indeed, such an exploration was worth pursuing.

[31]Robert Jay Lifton, Boundaries (New York 1969), pp.39, 46.

fundamentally creative possibilities inherent in this condition have been explored to their greatest advantage within a strand of American poetic inheritance to which Duncan committed himself. This includes the multiplicities and contradictions made available to the individual as a creative process by American poets as diverse as Whitman, Dickinson, Pound, H.D., Oppen and Olson. What was vital to their various poetics was a resistance to modern insistences on rational definitions of selfhood as a locus for control and narrowly focused knowledge. The tensions of this problem were given in the nineteenth-century by the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard through his considerations of dread, anxiety and fear:

> The law for the development of the self with respect to knowledge, in so far as it is true that the self becomes itself, is this, that the increasing degree of knowledge corresponds with the degree of self-knowledge, that the more the self knows, the more it knows itself. If this does not occur, then the more knowledge increases, the more it becomes a kind of inhuman knowing for the production of which man's self is squandered.[32]

The effort for these poets was to seek knowledge which does not limit the self, avoids the "inhuman" propensities of *paranoia*, and does not squander the qualities of selfhood which engage with the multiple experiences of the life of the mind. In their different ways, therefore, these poets and Duncan interrogated what Quentin Anderson called in an American context "the imperial self,"[33] formulating from the political tensions of that "imperial" status the means of a creative *paranoia* with which to confront the American thrust and modern disciplining of selves. Thus, Duncan affirmed that his epic sequence of poems, 'Passages,' was:

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[32]Søren Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death (Princeton, N.J. 1974), p.164.

[33]See Quentin Anderson, The Imperial Self: An Essay in American Literature and Culture (New York 1971).

> a work in which I seek to lose myself in the hearing of the voice of the work itself, a work not of personality or oneself but of structure and passages.
>
> ...What I would point out in my work as one of its underlying currents is the weaving of a figure unweaving, an art of unsaying what it says, of saying what it would not say.[34]

Duncan's effort in the 'Passages' and especially in his "Structure of Rime" sequence was to utilize the energies of *paranoia* in making connections and seeking a permanence in the linkage of poetics and certain harmonies of dissent through history. Sometimes this connectivity over-extends itself and asserts patterns of obscurity, but the sense exhibited in the latter part of this quotation contrasts importantly with the action signalled at the beginning of Gravity's Rainbow involving "not a disentanglement from, but a progressive *knotting into*" as detailed in the last chapter. Duncan, however, sought actively to deconstruct the restraining knots in the political control of myth, and:

> leave writer and reader
> up in the air
> to draw
> momentous
> inconclusions[35]

The approach of the younger yet contemporaneous poet, Allen Ginsberg, is worth considering alongside Duncan's for its similarities and differences. Ginsberg has been more involved in exploring the anxieties of self-centredness where it exists as a produced social necessity, in tension with Lifton's sense of the increasingly boundary-less and Protean self. For Ginsberg this may be mediated where:

> he is making the continuous open-ended epic which will end with his

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[34]Robert Duncan, 'The Self in Postmodern Poetry' in Duncan, Fictive Certainties, pp.227, 231.

[35]Robert Duncan, "Where It Appears, *Passages 4*" in Bending The Bow (New York 1968), p.15.

> life: the information programme for [Ginsberg] is endlessly exploratory, continually forming, disintegrating and re-forming... His self-centredness does make for a certain monotony of urgency, despair, reiteration of disasters and tyrants, and disgust with his alternately melancholic and exuberant self.[36]

The explorative urge that includes senses of vulnerability and its conditioned responses comes to be an essential element in an engagement with the paranoid vision, especially where Ginsberg, in his finest work, is able to escape the polarizations of self-centredness.

The actions and examples of *paranoia* in America during Duncan and Ginsberg's lives are multiple in the extreme, and the evidence extended in the last chapter could only trace some of the more obvious manifestations. The rise of the military-industrial complex and its annexations of political, social and psychological energies remains the most potent example of the ways in which *paranoia* plays its part in organizing and proliferating huge systems of information and invention, and this has emerged out of the creation of the modern nation state, corporate and state capitalism, and the linked series of industrial revolutions. Poets desiring to expose and combat the life-denying effects of these processes have had to develop poetics which counter that excess of creativity in its malign forms with their own excesses of systematized knowledge and modes of invention. Indeed, both Duncan and Ginsberg deliberately extend themselves and their poetics from the radicalism of William Blake, and the affirmation in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell that "[t]he road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom."[37] Similarly—and this time to paraphrase Blake again—in an environment in which the politics of industrialization threatens that those affected

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[36]Eric Mottram, Allen Ginsberg in the Sixties (Brighton 1972), p.19.

[37]William Blake, Complete Writings, ed. Geoffrey Keynes, (Oxford 1972), p.150.

might become what they behold, excess must be met by carefully differentiated counter–strategies of excess, and *paranoia* needs to be met by a poetics of creative *paranoia*. For Duncan this requires the understanding that "[t]he very inspiration that carries the artist through in a state that combines fear for form and faith in form to realize the imperatives of his poem, moves makers of history who write their works in the lives of men" (TLM, p.15).

The enormous production of paranoid energies in this "history" has in large part been devoted to the production of exclusive fictions which Duncan sets his mythic recoveries against. Two different American cultural commentators, Noam Chomsky and J. K. Galbraith, have elucidated these fictions in illuminating ways. Chomsky argues that the needs for threat and the economic desirability of a war machine have required the sustenance of what he calls the "operative illusion," where the American population is carefully administered insulating fictions from a power elite about the dangers confronted by the state, and the efficiencies with which it deals with them. The scenario is one in which:

> [c]ontroversy may rage as long as it adheres to the presuppositions that define the consensus of elites, and it should furthermore be encouraged within these bounds, thus helping to establish these doctrines as the very condition of thinkable thought while reinforcing the belief that freedom reigns.
>
> In short, what is essential is to set the agenda.[38]

Bakunin's exposure of what constitutes the ever–touted justification of deceit and illegality in these contexts, "*for reasons of state*," became the title of one of Chomsky's earlier books, and informs Galbraith's notion of "institutional truth," or that set of fictions which "serves the needs and purposes of the large and socially

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[38]Noam Chomsky, Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies (Boston 1989), p.48.

pervasive institutions that increasingly dominate modern life." Unfortunately, Galbraith hoped that the elite he was addressing in these circumstances at Smith College, Massachussets, "will choose reality,"[39] and once again those likely to make political decisions find themselves back in the paranoid fictional drives and "management of reality" besetting Robert S. McNamara as detailed in the last chapter.

Both Duncan and Ginsberg see an absolute necessity in post–1945 America to develop forms of protest in their poetry that challenge these exclusive fictional excesses as they extend from the encompassing grip of what Jacques Ellul, in his analysis of The Technological Society, called "technique," the "totality of methods rationally arrived at and having absolute efficiency."[40] Duncan's sequence "Passages," and Ginsberg's collections, Planet News (1968) and The Fall of America: poems of these states 1965–1971 (1972) employ poetics of exposure, outrage and deliberate mergings of myth and the layers of reality sold to captive populations in the maintenance of national emergency. Ginsberg assumes the role of antenna and reporter during his travels across America, drawing in the spectrum of news and coercions of perception and extending it back in patterned and juxtaposed segments of consciousness:

> The President at home
> in his swinging chair on the porch
> listening to Christmas Carols
> Vice–President returning from Far East
> "Check into yourself that you are wrong —
> You may be the Wrong" says Pope His

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[39]J. K. Galbraith, Commencement Address, Graduation Ceremony, Smith College, Massachusetts, July 1989. Published in The Guardian, 28 July 1989, p.23.

[40]Jacques Ellul, The Technological Society, translated by John Wilkinson (London 1965), p.ix.

Christmas Message —[41]

In 'Passages 26: The Soldiers,' Duncan invokes the power of a direct address set against the current political discourse, and extends to those drafted into the Vietnam war and those on whose behalf they fight a field of aligned discourses and fictions, whose revelations sit energized in the poem in their cross-cultural referentiality, and which therefore convey at multiple levels of consciousness the impact of American global activities:

> O you, who know nothing of the great theme of War,
> fighting because you have to, blindly, at no frontier
> of the Truth but in-
> structed by liars and masters of the Lie, your own
> liberty of action
> their first victim...
>
> The first Evil is that which has power over you.
>
> Coercion, this is Ahriman.
>
> In the endless Dark the T.V. screen,
> the lying speech and pictures selling its time and produce,
> corpses of its victims burnd black by napalm
>
> —Ahriman, the inner need for the salesman's pitch—
>
> the image of the mannequin, smoking, driving its car at high speed,
> elegantly dresst, perfumed, seducing, without
>
> odor of Man or odor of sanctity,
>
> in the place of the Imago Xristi[42]

The poetic action is to deconstruct the "agenda," in Chomsky's phrase, and reassemble it within the creative *paranoia* of a mythicized consciousness drawing on East and

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[41]Allen Ginsberg, 'These States: Into L.A.' in Collected Poems 1947-1980 (New York 1984), p.376.

[42]Robert Duncan, Bending The Bow (New York 1968), pp.114-115.

West, which may be used to counter the instrumental reason of a government advised by the Rand Corporation. As Duncan states, "[f]or the illuminati of this kind of rationalism, all spiritual men seem to have regressed into the irrational darkness of primitive mind" (TLM, p.28), and the need for Duncan is to reconstitute an understanding of what myth is and how it might extend a creative *paranoia* in place of the contemporary combinations of anxiety and fear. The processes of reading an epic sequence like "Passages"—that is, the learning, pleasure and exploration of an open field of formal, physical and gnostic possibilities—offer themselves for this purpose, and in political terms go further than Robert Bertholf's sense that "[c]reating an inner fiction of consciousness out of actual reality is a central proposition of Duncan's poetry."[43]

These fictional and systematizing possibilities extended through poetry need also to be aligned with certain philosophical debates emerging in the past 100 years. The decades just before and after the beginning of the twentieth-century, in fact, saw a particularly fruitful discussion of mental process and its synthesizing capabilities which included such luminaries as William James and A.N.Whitehead, and which led to the expansion of phenomenological apprehensions of how perception and thought interact. The direct impact of Whitehead on Charles Olson and thence Robert Duncan has been dealt with elsewhere, especially where Whitehead asserted the importance of poetic language as a necessary and dynamic adjunct to mathematical and scientific techniques in exploring the nature of "reality." The largely ignored philosopher Hans Vaihinger deserves some mention for his championing of fiction in these contexts,

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[43]Robert Bertholf, 'Robert Duncan: Blake's Contemporary Voice' in ed. Robert Bertholf & Annette Levitt, William Blake and the Moderns (Albany, N.Y. 1982), p.101.

even though he does not figure directly in any intellectual lineage claimed by Duncan. Vaihinger's The Philosophy of As-If: A System of the Theoretical, Practical and Religious Fictions of Mankind (1911; first translated into English 1924) advanced what he called the "Law of the Preponderance of the Means over the End," and explained how thought and perception have to confront the world in the posture of developed fictions in order to deal with the profusion of phenomena. This profusion is organized into the patterns enabled where fictions are projected onto and relativize reality so that we deal with the world "as if" it existed according to our perception of it. The paranoid potentials obvious in this apprehension—both creative and malign—are not fully drawn out by Vaihinger, though, like Whitehead, he locates a synthesizing agency underpinning the coexistence of rational science and sensation, emotion and their linguistic forms. For Vaihinger, this agency is fiction, where "the essential element in a fiction is not the fact of its being a conscious deviation from reality, a mere piece of imagination—but we stress the useful nature of this deviation. This utility constitutes the transition from the pure subjectivity of Kant to a modern Positivism."[44] Vaihinger's stress on logic tends to de-emphasise the poetics of the situation, yet his work fed directly into the influential "General Systems Theory" developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy, who saw in Vaihinger's:

> terminology [that] 'symbolic' or 'analogical' fiction is closely related to poetic metaphors on one side, and myth on the other... Primitive man, but also the artist and poet, looks at things as if they were all living.

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[44]Hans Vaihinger, The Philosophy of As-If: A System of Theoretical, Practical and Religious Fictions of Mankind, translated by C. K. Ogden (1911; London 1949), p.99. In the preface to Bending the Bow, Robert Duncan states: "Working in words I am an escapist; *as if* I could step out of my clothes and move naked as the wind in a world of words. But I want every part of the actual world involved in my escape. I bring the laws that bound me into an aerial structure in which they are unbound as outlines of a prison unfolding." Bending the Bow, p.v. My italics.

> Thus he sees demons and gods in the forces of nature and even in objects of everyday use. Mythical experience is not a primitive precursor of scientific thought, for the latter is still bound to myths and personifications. On the other hand, the scientific mind tends to eliminate this mythical experience from its description of the world and thereby subjects our intellectual operations to a great internal tension.[45]

One might add to this, and to Duncan's insistence on the "truth and life of myth" as a means of using and/or mediating such "great internal tension," Paul Ricoeur's essential understanding of the function of metaphor, which "is to compose an essential representation of human actions; its appropriate method is to speak the truth by means of fiction, fable and tragic mythos."[46] What is clear in the developments of the electronic revolution, the media, and the extensions of information super highways is the recognition of the vital importance of fictions, and the degree of their penetrations of mental process, as a means of control. Advertising, as a permeation of twentieth–century life, may be seen as a training in being paranoid where subjects are impressed that if they do not possess certain commodities they won't be secure. The result has been an inability, in fact, to distinguish between documentary and fiction, powered by the imperatives of commodity capitalism which extends something less than an open field of signification and consumption. The ability to *read* fiction and therefore mediate *paranoia* is made less and less available, whilst the amount of fiction produced for consumption continues to proliferate, as Oedipa Maas finds to her distress throughout Thomas Pynchon's The Crying of Lot 49 where she is made aware

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[45]Ludwig von Bertalanffy, Perspectives on General Systems Theory: Scientific–Philosophical Studies (New York 1975), p.67.

[46]Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, translated by Robert Czerny, with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello (London 1971), p.22.

that she lives perpetually "[a]s if...there were revelation in progress all around her."[47]

Some other thinkers need to be mentioned here. The first of these, Ernst Cassirer, is cited by Duncan in 'The Truth and Life and Myth' as a "twentieth-century mythologist" (TLM, p.5) alongside Lévi-Strauss, Freud and Malraux, amongst others. Cassirer's extraordinary three volume The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms undertakes an exploration of the synthesizing and systematizing capabilities of the mind, and the second part, "Mythical Thought" (1925), locates the vital role of myth in drawing together religion, science and notions of causality. Cassirer suggests that myth "begins with the intuition of purposive action," and dispenses with any empirical senses of randomness or the accidental in what would now be identified as a "gestalt" sensibility. Thus, mythical thought sets itself against purely empirical causalities which look to specified chains of components for results. For mythical thought "the part does not merely represent the whole, but 'really' specifies it; the relationship is not symbolic and intellectual, but real and material."[48] Cassirer concludes by dealing necessarily with the relationship between myth and illusion, in the face of empiricism's use of illusion as the grounds for dismissal of myth's function in the creation of reality. But, as Cassirer argues, mythical thought possesses a sense of immanence which consciously extends through illusion its own truth and law; and in terms appealing to any artist, Cassirer articulates the ways in which art can counter the oppositional and negative forces which inhabit fixed systems of belief. These premises, however, are not given within the understanding of artistic processes available to Duncan in his

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[47]Thomas Pynchon, The Crying of Lot 49 (1966; London 1979), p.29.

[48]Ernst Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume Two: Mythical Thought, translated by Ralph Manheim (1925; New Haven 1955), pp.49-50.

utilization and creation of open artistic forms:

> [T]he involvement and opposition of meaning and image are among the essential conditions of religion. If this involvement and opposition were ever replaced by a pure and perfect equilibrium, the inner tension of religion, on which rests its significance as a symbolic form, would be negated. The striving for such an equilibrium points therefore to another sphere. Only when we turn from the mythical image world and the world of religious meaning to the sphere of art and artistic expression does the opposition which dominates the development of the religious consciousness appear to be in a sense appeased, if not negated... In the return to this law there arises a new freedom of consciousness: the image no longer reacts upon the spirit as an independent material thing but becomes for the spirit a pure expression of its own creative power.[49]

Duncan sought to introduce forms of disequilibrium into this understanding of mythical thought and artistic process in response to his environments and their contemporary pressures. Pattern and coherence are certainly sought within American life, but the mythic extensions of America into a field of individual and communal actions which need to coexist in forms of disequilibrium are pursued with an appropriate poetics extending from the artistic revolutions of the twentieth–century.

The problems of linking poetry and mythical thought with science and technology which Whitehead deemed necessary have found an example in the American polymath and designer, Buckminster Fuller. Fuller's extraordinary life and work was devoted to maximizing the potential of human survival systems and their uses of resources in ways which are as efficient as possible and justly distributed. Fuller's approach to technology and technological thinking was one deliberately intended to dissolve *paranoia* in scientific fields where it has been a key part of process. An example of this was his championing throughout the years of the Cold War of an "Ultra–High–Voltage World Electric Grid" which would link the world's

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[49]Cassirer, The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Volume Two, pp.260–261.

electricity system through the Bering Strait between Alaska and the then Soviet Union, providing a globally viable, economic and politically mutual linkage of power systems. Fuller's theoretical expression of his intentions retains a drive for inclusivity and integration which aligns itself with a poetics of *creative paranoia* where it celebrates what Fuller called "synergetics." His urge is always to integrate, but in ways that seek to avoid the dangers outlined in the introduction using Roland Barthes, where integration may be inclusively exclusive. Fuller requires that:

> the comprehensive realizer of relativity may become competent as an integrator of the until–then–threatening chaotic dissipation of common advantage of men in universe brought about by runaway, diametric preoccupations of specializations. The comprehensive realizer becomes a synergist.[50]

Fuller wrote 'Total Thinking' in 1949 whilst in residence at Black Mountain College, North Carolina, an environment which encouraged him and a host of other American "comprehensive realizers," such as John Cage, Charles Olson, Robert Creeley and Robert Duncan, in their efforts to explore the poetics of their disciplines in ways that would make them available across the spectrum of arts and sciences. In the decades following World War Two, Fuller's work at Black Mountain College extended from the energies manifested there in a community of multiple knowledge which recognised that methods of "total thinking" were necessary to challenge totalitarianism in all its forms, especially any paranoid "bias [which] precludes synergetic advantage."[51]

What Fuller's writings demonstrate alongside the poetics that Duncan engages with is a working out of thought and an open inclusivity such as that insisted upon by

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[50]Buckminster Fuller, 'Total Thinking' in The Buckminster Fuller Reader (London 1975), p.308.

[51]Fuller, 'Total Thinking,' p.314.

another poet with Black Mountain College connections, Charles Olson. Olson's influential essays, 'Projective Verse' (1950) and 'Human Universe' (1951), are part of the determined counter– and creative *paranoia* that many American artists have concerned themselves with through the years since 1945. The former essay in particular sought to destroy the crippling notions and separations of mind, body and process which were simultaneously addressed by Gilbert Ryle in The Concept of Mind (1949). Ryle's intention is to expose the notions of mind as they are inherited from sixteenth–century mechanics and causality in ways that relate chronologically to Olson's poetics, not least where Ryle determines the shaping of consciousness since the Renaissance as "in part a transformed application of the Protestant notion of conscience." The tensions arising from this have already been approached in the contexts of Charles Brockden Brown and early American Puritan inheritances, but Ryle goes on to show how mind and thought have since been consolidated within what he calls the "para–mechanical hypothesis" and the "perception recipe," processes inherited from Cartesian philosophy determined to find a location for the disturbingly hidden processes of mind from which thought might be securely projected. Neither physiological mechanics nor rationality have been equal to this task because of the problems inherent in language as a medium of representation, and because they deny themselves the possibility of any gestalt apprehension of what mind involves in the actions of thought and sensation. At one point Ryle suggests that a major destabilizer of this concept of mind, and a momentum behind the endless penultimacy of self–referentiality, is the fact that "[o]ne thing I cannot prepare myself for is the next thought that I am going to think,"[52] which is precisely the energy underlying and

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[52]Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind (London 1978), p.188.

sought in Olson's appropriation in 'Projective Verse' of Edward Dahlberg's insistence that "ONE PERCEPTION MUST IMMEDIATELY LEAD TO A FURTHER PERCEPTION."[53] Olson consequently seeks to regain the processes of projection for poetry in ways which are not chained to the anxieties of incompletion, and which are certainly not linked to the problems Ryle identifies in the analogy of thinking with seeing which rational epistemology insists upon:

> Thinking things out is described as consisting, at least partly, of consecutive 'seeings' of implications. But this is to describe theorizing work by analogies with what is not work but achievement... It is like describing a journey as constituted by arrivals, search as constituted by findings, studying as constituted by examination triumphs, or, in a word, trying as constituted by successes.[54]

Charles Olson's take on this problem, and it is one placed at the forefront of the poetics deployed by Duncan and many other American poets through the twentieth-century, is the need to relocate poetry according to its kinetics and therefore "BREATH," whereby measure from an energized bodily source asserts itself against intellectual annexations of measure. In these terms Olson sets "the HEART, by way of the BREATH, to the LINE" against "the HEAD, by way of the EAR, to the SYLLABLE"[55] to assert projection and process against the ego-oriented forces of conclusion and closure. Again, it is a question of reading inside an area of inventions where "[t]he poem invents its form and invites the reader to enter the area of invention

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[53]Charles Olson, 'Projective Verse' in Selected Writings, ed. Robert Creeley, (New York 1967), p.17.

[54]Ryle, The Concept of Mind, p.286.

[55]Olson, Selected Writings, p.19.

rather than immediate recognition. The poem is an energy transference..."[56] Alternatives to the autonomy and rigid character of much contemporary poetry, to borrow David Shapiro's phrase, are thus extended against the pervasive cults of impersonality, dissociations of sensibility and confessional enclosures.

Many of these issues concerning poetics and fiction are seen by Duncan, Olson and others to have emerged from the problematic inheritance bequeathed by that congregation of artistic events called "Romanticism," especially the nostalgia for a lost unity or purity. However, Duncan and Olson have used John Keats's notion of "*negative capability*, that is, when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason"[57] to identify the possibilities for poetry extending from what Duncan calls "the intellectual adventure of not knowing." This is not a *paranoia* of insecurity but an environment in which fictions may be assembled towards a "truth...not of What Is, but of What Is Happening" (TLM, p.46). The problem for the poet in the Romantic legacy, however, has been the absorption of this "adventure of not knowing" into strategies of anxiety about subjectivity which may generate creative frictions in the apprehensions of self and other, but which also burden poetics with the staticities inherent in the dialectical process which supposedly ensues. Recent psychoanalytical work continues to plough a well-worked furrow concerning the sickness potential in obsessions with subjectivity—an obsession, of course, which the discourse and practice continues to

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[56]Eric Mottram, 'American Poetry, Poetics and Poetic Movements since 1950' in The Sphere History of Literature: American Literature since 1900, ed. Marcus Cunliffe (London 1987), p.246.

[57]John Keats, letter to brothers George & Tom, 22 December, 1817. Duncan mentions Keats and "negative capability" in 'The Truth and Life of Myth,' Fictive Certainties, p.46; and Olson in 'Equal, That Is, To The Real Itself' in Selected Writings, p.46.

entrench. For instance, Mikkel Borch–Jakobsen's The Freudian Subject (1988) sees *paranoia* as a general feature in the constitution of subjectivity where so much physical and mental energy is invested in the confrontation of the other and vain efforts to achieve its assimilation or destruction. An essential element of post–Romantic poetics concerned with strategies of *creative paranoia* has therefore been to overcome the primary Romantic plot of irretrievably lost unity. The sense of death in that plot which is engaged within such suffocating forms of inevitability has largely precluded a radical politics and has been responsible for much of the subsequent marginalization of arts in Western and American culture.

The imperative in response to this continuing manifestation of "instrumental reason" is to develop a poetics which effectively counters the pervasive mythology of the Romantic artist as sick, unstable and less than whole, and who therefore possesses a voice with little weight in any political debate—though the work may have commercial value. Duncan's affirmation of the psychosis of "the shaman and inspired poet" is part of a poetic lineage (invoked also by Ginsberg, amongst other American poets) which seeks access to essential perceptions and fictions through the bardic necessity of a derangement of the senses. Whether through the exercise of imagination, vision, hallucination or narcotic experience—and, of course, the energies of composition and revision—the assertion that "[t]he fictive proposition is also visionary reality" has to be set against "the ready suspicion and accusation that the poet has not really *earned* or *deserved* to have wonder manifest in the poem" (TLM, pp.28, 25). It becomes an environment of reflexive *paranoia* and counter–diagnoses of sickness, with "truth" on all sides, something perhaps most evident in Ginsberg's experience of maternal madness, his visions of Blake, and the legal and other assaults

on his poetry and lifestyle through the 1950s and 1960s:

> Recent history is the record of a vast conspiracy to impose one level of mechanical consciousness on mankind and exterminate all manifestations of that unique part of human sentience...
> America is having a nervous breakdown...
> A huge sadistic police bureaucracy has risen in every state, encouraged by the central government, to persecute the illuminati, to brainwash the public with official lies about the drugs, and to terrify and destroy those addicts whose spiritual search has made them sick.[58]

Accusation and counter-accusation build and reinvest in the systems of *paranoia* which tend to reinforce the hegemony: the transformation of these energies on the poet's part into the creative *paranoia* of the realized destabilizing poem has a more potent effect. Indeed, the poem can demonstrate from its fictive and shamanic extensions that it is confronting a paranoid ideology in which, according to Régis Debray, the "transformation of the tool of demystification into a monstrous mythology takes political discourse back to animism and its authors from the status of a rhetor to that of a sorcerer."[59]

The extension of power in the totally administered society occurs in the government of a reality-principle alongside a charged recognition of the magic held by those wielding political and scientific power. The disruption of this in constructive ways depends upon a *creative paranoia* that systematizes in open forms and therefore fears any submission to occulted enclosures in which "[i]ntegration itself proves in the end to be an ideology for disintegration into power groups which exterminate each

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[58]Allen Ginsberg, 'Poetry, Violence, and the Trembling Lambs' in The Poetics of the New American Poetry, ed. Donald Allen and Warren Tallman (New York 1973), pp.331-332.

[59]Régis Debray, Critique of Political Reason (London 1983), p.65.

other."[60] Thus, it is vital that the poet avoid the gravitation from visionary shaman to priest, as several critics have pointed out in relation to the explorations of Dionysian excess in America since the 1960s,[61] for in the territory of the priest lies the *paranoia* of repression inside closed form.

Dionysus and the occult in Western culture has, in fact, been an abiding concern of the distinguished work of Norman O. Brown, particularly where he has focused on the needs to engage creatively with *paranoia* in American culture. In this element of his work, Brown has sought to elucidate the ways in which *paranoia* is an essential part of the interaction of mystery, secrets and the occult in a society obsessed also with the nature of surveillance and the covert. As Brown suggests in his seminal essay, 'From Politics to Metapolitics' (1967), the problem for anyone engaged in what is termed here *creative paranoia* lies within the way politics operates in America, despite its democratic origins and process. Much more profound than Richard Hofstadter's notion of a "paranoid style" in American politics is Brown's assertion that:

> Politics is systems
> There is a hidden truth or secret
> that is what the Unconscious is all about
> But it cannot be put into systematic, reified, permanent form
> Systematic reified permanent form creates an elite who possess the secret
> (Platonic academy, occult order, political party,
> the repository of the secret)
> Mass mysticism is poetry
> an open secret[62]

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[60]Theodor Adorno, 'Theses Against Occultism' in Minima Moralia: Reflections From A Damaged Life (London 1978), p.240.

[61]See Eric Mottram, 'Dionysus in America' in Mottram, Blood On The Nash Ambassador (London 1989), pp.181–220; and Shamoon Zamir, 'The Artist as Prophet, Priest and Gunslinger: Ishmael Reed's Cowboy in the Boat of Ra' in Callaloo, 17:4, (1994), pp.1205–1235.

[62]Norman O. Brown, 'From Politics to Metapolitics' in Caterpillar, 1, 1967, p.88. Originally delivered as the Frederic William Atherton Lecture at Harvard University, March 20, 1967.

Hope—and by extension, a sense that *paranoia* may assume a creative dimension in these environments—emerges in Brown's somewhat utopian connection of "mass mysticism" and "poetry."

This is problematised, however, in Brown's more recent appraisal of poetry's position in American culture (and, not incidentally, where he mentions that Robert Duncan introduced him to contemporary American poetry). Brown suggests that poetry may be able to articulate "the Unconscious" in certain ways, but that in the culture it still confronts the fact that:

> mysteries are unpublishable...because they cannot be put into words...[and] because only some can see them, not all. Mysteries are intrinsically esoteric, and as such are an offence to democracy... Truth [in democracy] is what any fool can see. This is what is meant by the so-called scientific method.[63]

In these terms, therefore, poets work in areas which are fundamentally undemocratic, apprehending mysteries, dealing in revelations, and formulating their own systems in ways which are exclusive in the dimensions given to knowledge in much of the administration of society and culture. To avoid the destructive energies of *paranoia* elements of their work need to engage an approach of the order of Alfred Korzybski's "non-Aristotelian training" extended from his theory of General Semantics, where he demonstrates the possibilities of freeing oneself from the coercions and restricted perception of language and knowledge formulated within post-Aristotelian parameters.[64]

These issues provide a suitable transition point into a poem which shows

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[63]Norman O. Brown, 'Apocalypse: The Place of Mystery in the Life of the Mind' in Apocalypse And/Or Metamorphosis (Berkeley, CA. 1991), p.3.

[64]See Alfred Korzybski, Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics (1933; Lakeville, CT. 1958).

Duncan deliberately wrestling with the energies and potential repressions manifest in poetry, and the *paranoia* inherent in their American poetic circumstance. Duncan's 'Santa Cruz Propositions,' written initially between 13–28 October 1968 and collected in Ground Work: Before The War (1984), offers an extraordinary collage of events in which the poet's questioning of his proximity to the dangers of *paranoia* reveals itself within questionings of the poet's relation to "The Muse," the Academy and its systematizing of knowledge, the warfare of American society, and other poets. Duncan carefully sites the poem in relation to certain temporal and spatial fields of action, anchoring systems of experiential process which emerge in a series of formal possibilities in response to various anxieties. Section One opens and pursues "The Muse" via the image of the poet as surfer, imbued with West Coast momentums and poised at the unfolding margin of American energies, yet anxiously aware of the creative/destructive matrix involved in a poetics of revelation:

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                    I

[10PM-1AM, 13-14, October 1968]
Troubled surfer seeking the about-to-break line
of the wave in it to ride       toward revelation,

...and the depth of the sea you would have borne forward

is the depth of an impending failure   among us  who
if we fall from the board, as we must,
   fall into the facts of the polluted stream.

Poetry!    Would Poetry have sustaind us?   It's lovely
   ...a current that sweeps all stagnant things up
   into a torrent of confidence   beyond thought.[65]
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[65]Robert Duncan, 'Santa Cruz Propositions' in Ground Work: Before The War (New York 1984), p.36. Hereafter referred to as 'SCP.' One of Duncan's important techniques throughout the poem is to vary typeface and the size of typeface from speaker to speaker, and different sequence to sequence, as an emphasis of difference within an overall collagic effect. As far as possible, this will be replicated in quotation here, as will the essential formal arrangement of the poetry on the page, thus requiring that each quotation be indented, however short.

The first section of the poem features a series of rhythmic polarities which engage with the debate about knowledge, the creative process and their relationship to "The Muse" where:

> Yet we need her. We don't need her...
> Yet we want her. We don't want her (SCP, p.37)

in an oscillation built on the sense that:

> The mind is not content but
> must build even of discontent histories,
> palaces, commands, grand
> impositions --all for *Her!* (SCP, p.37)

The fact that "The Muse" cares nothing for these actions generates an energy of insecurity in the poet who recognises that only:

> his word-power go[es] out futilely
> to war with the insolent mob where
> her boundaries advance. (SCP, p.38)

Yet it is also in this insecurity and the shifts of Lifton's Protean self that the poet (and here Duncan moves into the first person) may secure their connections to and play within the extensive fictions available. "The Muse," and within the sense of Julia Kristeva's notion of the semiotic or pre-oedipal language:

> Old Mummummymurmurur
> turns in the applause of her surfs
> and takes us with her inevitably
> away from the light, westward,
> into the undertow and night of our species.
>
> ...the transformations of Who-I-Am,
> as if incomplete, inconsistently surviving
> in me. (SCP, pp.38-39)

In the final part of the poem's first section Duncan brings together this maternal force with the "Ur-Father, Hairy Bull of the Waters/bellowing in her," seeing in their union a fertile turbulence:

They were One, He/She
of the Great Mouth Chaos became in them,
Chaos expiring in the Speech of the Winds.
(SCP, p.39).

Such chaos finds in poetry of this kind its most amenable mediation into expression where open form provides a less constricting pattern free of the rigidly formulaic. Indeed, as recent movements within science towards what is now termed "Chaos Theory" show, there have been more fulfilled recognitions among scientists that they need to turn away from the *paranoia* of instrumental reason towards discovery techniques that are prepared to embrace fictional and other apprehensions. As James Gleick suggests:

> Chaos poses problems that defy accepted ways of working in science. It makes strong claims about the universal behaviour of complexity. The first chaos theorists...had an eye for pattern, especially pattern that appeared on different scales at the same time. They had a taste for randomness and complexity, for jagged edges and sudden leaps... They feel [contemporarily] that they are turning back a trend in science toward reductionism, the analysis of systems in terms of their constituent parts: quarks, chromosomes, or neurons. They believe that they are looking for the whole.[66]

Poets all along have been involved in what Jerome and Diane Rothenberg's exploration of world poetics identifies as a "Symposium of the Whole," drawing their title from Robert Duncan, and it still remains to be seen whether science can fully enter into the creative *paranoia* which has been and continues to be variously employed by "Technicians of the Sacred" the world around; to which end science must forsake its largely destructive component and commodity oriented *paranoia*.[67]

In the second section of 'Santa Cruz Propositions' Duncan assembles a collage

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[66]James Gleick, Chaos: Making a New Science (London 1988), p.5.

[67]See ed. Jerome Rothenberg, Technicians of the Sacred (Berkeley, CA. 1985) & ed. Jerome and Diane Rothenberg, Symposium of the Whole: A Range of Discourse Toward an Ethnopoetics (Berkeley, CA. 1983).

of materials which focus more particularly on the extension of *paranoia* from specific power situations. "The Muse" metamorphosizes into Charles Dickens' "Madame Defarge," the figure of revolutionary terror around and within whom *paranoia* is generated as a political necessity, and who:

> knots into the thread of his life to enlarge his Fate
> her *own*
> [21 October] plotted deprivations of his sight.
> (SCP, p.40)

The first part of section two grounds itself in a parody of the dialogue between Socrates and Diotima concerning the intertwinings of love and knowledge, especially as they have been politically and culturally oriented around the Socratic *gnothi seauton*, or need to "know thyself" as a predicate for successful action and mental and emotional fulfillment. It is the tension between the desired security of knowing the self and the Keatsian and Romantic "adventure of not knowing" that underlies this poetic confrontation of *paranoia*, centred on the problem of:

> *an assumed knowingness about his*
> *gnawing Nothing so that he wants Knot*
> *that has befuddled Philosophy with method.*
> *Him and his nosey sayauton!*
> (SCP, p.40)

The tension is intensified on several interweaved levels as the articulator of these thoughts remains the feminine Muse/Defarge figure. In a passage immediately prior to this, Duncan lays bare the problems for the intellectual poet beset by desires for priestly powers inside the politically organized scope of creative energies, where he:

> stands at the Gate of the Claim he would make
> to the exalted rank he sees
> accorded to the persons of Socrates and Kierkegaard,
> grand PhDs of an academic Immunity
> he does not see as it is
> shaken in the terrors Mind knows in Her thrall.
> (SCP, p.40)

In a reading of and commentary on this section, Duncan stated that during composition he "was listening to a graduate student read part of his thesis on Kierkegaard and it struck me that the thesis was written in all earnest—and a thesis in theology, which is more appalling—by somebody who had never been in the territory at all as an experience."[68] At the time, Duncan was teaching on the 'History of Consciousness' course in the graduate program at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and as his commentary on the poem details, he became radically aware of the intersections of paranoid energies involved in the systematizing of knowledge, the compositional process, the contemporary American cultural energies manifested in terms of Dionysus and Eros, and the incursions into consciousness via the media of violence and murder. Duncan talks of his teaching situation in which "I was trying to get across to [the students] reading texts, and what happened to them in the dreams, and what happened in life, like a happy paranoiac reads everything as being of consequence. What would we assume if the world was a message?" This is then juxtaposed with the earnest ignorance of the graduate student—and consequently the complicity of the academy in the control and formulation of knowledge—in amongst the social upheavals of the 1960s, and the specific event of a murder in Santa Cruz, so that:

> suddenly a new piece of data was in. A Japanese doctor and his entire family were found murdered by the side of this swimming pool by some maniac killer. And the newspapers then for the next two or three weeks were filled with it. The killer was found soon, and the message and the reasons, so while I was instructing a class to produce a paranoiac poem looking at newspapers as being news of what was happening, a paranoid was loose who was doing exactly the same thing and built into the poem then in its collage are sections of the

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[68]Robert Duncan reading 'Santa Cruz Propositions,' section two, at the Polytechnic of Central London, June 1975.

> instructions, the printed instructions, that this paranoiac had had for the murder of the doctor and his wife and children, people he didn't know at all. And more than that, built into it are as also coming as absolute parts of the poem are sections of the newspaper copy talking about the finding of the killer. And this... back and forth then goes into a dialogue directly with Diotima's discussion of the murderess and absolutely hostile to mankind nature of Eros.[69]

The poem and the murders here predate by a year the notorious Manson murders and those at the Altamont rock festival. Eric Mottram has shown in detail how these latter events focused many sensibilities on the destructive energies within the separations of Dionysus and Eros where unrestrained power and violence enters the dance of release so earnestly sought in America during the 1960s.[70] Duncan's warnings are both prescient and part of the wider debate about the nature of creative energy through the period. What marks Duncan's work here, however, along with the poetry of Allen Ginsberg and Norman O. Brown's cultural investigations, are the efforts to draw out of a poetic synthesis a means of recovering creative alignments of *paranoia*. The reading of the world in these terms needs to be made in forms capable of resisting coercion and limitation, and may need to be extended from shamanic invitation. A poem such as Ginsberg's "Wichita Vortex Sutra" (1968) and Brown's book Love's Body (1966) execute a similar collagic and juxtapositional strategy to that employed by Duncan in 'Santa Cruz Propositions':

> *"What do you mean, Diotima, is Eros then evil and Foul?"*
>
> Frazier's residence was a dilapidated cowshed behind a half–dozen larger similar structures
>
> *"He is a great demon, and, like all spirits, he is intermediate"*

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[69]Duncan, Polytechnic of Central London, June 1975.

[70]Mottram, 'Dionysus in America,' pp.181–220.

"as brought to you by the people of the Free Universe"

...The victims, their hands tied with scarves, were shot and
thrown into the pool of the $250,000 Ohta home, a half-mile
from Frazier's ramshackle cabin

"sacrifices and mysteries and charms, and all"

reachd by a flimsy swing bridge

*"prophecy and incantation find their way. The wisdom
which understands this"*

(Indefensible!)

Hidden under trees, however, are the camps of young people
with wild hair and outlandish customs

"went into the garden of Zeus and fell into a heavy sleep"
(SCP, pp.40-41)

The rejection of Eros, the appalling slaughter of the Japanese family, and the "sleep" in the "garden of Zeus" are dynamically interlinked manifestations of life denial which Duncan extends further on in the section into a mantric reoccurrence of "need" and "desire" as they draw energies inwards before destructive paranoid release. The poet is not exempted from this danger, as Duncan acknowledges, and prepares for the final section of the poem where he attacks Denise Levertov for what he believes are the self-destructive techniques of her anti-war protest. For Duncan love must be chosen as an energizer of thought and arbiter of knowledge, but only as an inclusive energy whose release will be an on-going revelatory force, as Eric Mottram also asserts in concluding his study of 'Dionysus in America' when he states: "It is Eros we must choose beyond Dionysus. The Devil is death if you let him stop you."[71] Duncan's conclusions are more cryptically given within the complex relationship explored

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[71]Mottram, 'Dionysus in America,' p.219.

throughout the poem between poet and muse, and the entanglements of Socratic necessity producing the tortuous ambivalences within "desire" and "need":

> [28 October] Mankind must stop!
>
> She dances upon his heart!
>
> His Nature tramples his heart!
>
> (SCP, p.43)

The result in contemporary circumstances may be the confusions inside which the poet's energies are diverted from creative *paranoia* to exclusive forms of self-analysis and/or destructively transformational protest. Such confusions in wider terms also conceal and reveal the occult force desired by those extending systems of authority, especially in any appropriation of revolutionary energies, ensuring that they truly revolve to re-emplace the dominance and utility of *paranoia*. Thus Duncan ends section two with this ironic and chilling warning:

> Madame Defarge signals the Court that the Sentence is at hand.
> Her secret *agents provocateurs* stir among the listeners, fingering the men who are to die
>
> *"in order to give birth"* a new Law and Order! Anew!"
>
> (SCP, p.44).

Section three of 'Santa Cruz Propositions' consists of an address to Denise Levertov, intercutting and completing the poem with materials from Levertov's poems and communications between the two poets. Although she does not mention 'Santa Cruz Propositions' specifically, Levertov's essay 'Some Duncan Letters--A Memoir and Critical Tribute' explores the grounds for Duncan's response to her poetry and activism during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Duncan casts her as "Kālī," the Hindu goddess of rage and destruction, for her proclamation in poetry later published in To Stay Alive (1971) that *"There comes a time when only Anger is Love."* (SCP, p.46),

the line with which Duncan concludes his poem. Levertov is accused by Duncan of allowing destructive revolutionary energies to limit her poetics, and, within the scope of his poem, of metamorphosing into "Madame Outrage of the Central Committee" (SCP, p.45), thus turning from a creative *paranoia* to:

> the center of terror
> that is the still eye of the storm in her:
> (SCP, p.46)

Levertov replies somewhat ironically that, within a wider context of disagreement and misreading, she had "never been given to paranoia," and that many of Duncan's reactions to her anti-war poetry exhibited an "'irritable reaching' stretch[ing] beyond 'fact and reason' to search out complications for which there is no evidence."[72] There is validity in both poets' positions, of course, as each pursued their chosen form of activism in a period of desperation before individual and state-endorsed violence. In her terms Duncan may well have fallen foul in his misreadings of Levertov of that tendency bemoaned by Keats and against which was set "Negative Capability": what is not in doubt, however, is the extent to which Duncan attempts to fulfill a poetics of creative *paranoia* which he sets against destructively fixed purpose and the media-reinforced banalities of the period's appropriation of love, turning it into a discredited and impotent force. The interchange between the two poets provokes in both an intertextuality resolved to explore and systematize the radical issues of the moment, so that where Duncan extends his paranoid vision of "Kālī," so Levertov responds with her own creative *paranoia*:

> (And meanwhile Robert

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[72]Denise Levertov, 'Some Duncan Letters--A Memoir and A Critical Tribute' in Robert Duncan: Scales of the Marvelous, ed. Robert Bertholf and Ian Reid, (New York 1979), pp.91, 108.

sees me as Kali! No,
I am not Kali, I can't sustain for a day
that anger.
'There comes
a time
when only anger
is love'—
I wrote it, but know such love
only in flashes.

And the love that streams
towards me daily, letters and poems, husband and child,
sings...)[73]

Overall, therefore, 'Santa Cruz Propositions' is a powerful exploration of what creativity may be in its multiple manifestations, and within the context of 1960s American urges towards "freedom" suggests how those attempting self-empowerment, with whatever justification, must beware the inevitable and destructive entanglements of *paranoia*. The poet may be able to provide an environment of creative *paranoia* for him or herself and, by extension, others receptive to an open and invitational form. Furthermore, this will depend on the poet being wary, as Olson warned Duncan, of "wisdom as such," or signs or systems adhered to outside the Blakean imperative of the self-produced system where "art is washed away, turned into that second force, religion."[74] Duncan's extensive development of what he called his "Grand Collage" throughout his poetry, especially in the epic 'Structure of Rime' and 'Passages' sequences, confronts the problems of mediating the chaos and imprisoning systems of the world with an approach energized by creative *paranoia*. 'Santa Cruz Propositions' stands as a microcosm of that overall design, placing the *paranoia* of those obsessed

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[73]Denise Levertov, 'Report' in To Stay Alive (New York 1971), pp.81-82.

[74]Charles Olson, 'Against Wisdom As Such' in Black Mountain Review (1954), Vol.1, No.1, p.37.

with power alongside the creative *paranoia* of the poet challenging with his own energizing forms. This action is given perhaps best in section two where, in the energies of meaning conjured out of collagic juxtaposition, Duncan momentarily defines the appalling prospects of American senses of personal and universal security:

> Every man armd!
> To keep the Peace!
> *"and dead at another moment"* In need!
>
> (SCP, p.42)

CONCLUSION

> Countercultures, secret societies, academies—the tribes and the anti-tribes—collide, mix, change, and move towards an optimum membership of *one*. The secrets are out, Initiation becomes Self-initiation or the verb "initiate" grows steadily intransitive... As an interior sociology and archeology of the processual, [ethnopoetics] is also a tool for opening the secrets further, opening them into our lives.[1]

This dissertation has undertaken a history of *paranoia* in an effort to understand how perceptions of mental process and consequently how perception itself may be politically determined. It has placed a history of discourses alongside literary and cultural analyses to demonstrate both differences and alignments in the metamorphosis of *paranoia* as a concept and a diagnosis throughout Western and American culture and science. In particular it has traced the ways in which *paranoia* has variously existed as reflexive term, operating in contexts of suspicion, certainty, indictment and reaction, where definitions of normativeness, health and coercion have extended from paranoid positions of power to encourage paranoid responses in those subjected.

From its vantage point in the late twentieth-century as the major world power—at least militarily and culturally—the United States continues to be vexed by the problems of *paranoia*. The exercise of power manifested to sustain and proliferate its influence in this position continues an extraordinary production of *paranoia*, focused both on external and internal threats to the advancement of American liberal capitalist democracy. This process of production still emanates on a broad cultural level from what was identified at the outset of

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[1]George Quasha, 'The Age of the Open Secret: a writing piece on Ethnopoetics, the Other Tradition, and social Transformation,' cited in Symposium of the Whole: A Range of Discourse Toward an Ethnopoetics, ed. Jerome & Diane Rothenberg (Berkeley, CA. 1983), p.342. Text italics.

the dissertation as a particular "American ideology," in H.T.Wilson's sense, and, simultaneously, from an understanding that "one of the consequences of [the American] rational vision was a separation of magnanimous moral intent and pragmatic power-seeking."[2]

Furthermore, as it approaches the turn of the century the United States faces what Michael Barkun suggests is a dangerous confluence of "two strands of apocalyptic thought," highlighting the particular teleological drive within American culture in which so many recent writers have aligned their plots, their sense of *paranoia*, and their "Thinking About the End in Contemporary America."[3] Barkun identifies these apocalyptic strands as *religious*, involving an upsurge in millennial beliefs, and *secular*, with specific stress on scientific perceptions of the breakdown of ecological, physiological and social systems. His fear is that:

> the disquieting possibility remains...that if both strands of apocalyptic thought should agree on the reading of events, then the potential for one grand self-fulfilling prophecy is greatly increased and panic may produce the effects once assigned to supernatural agents.[4]

This apocalyptic scenario offers a range of prospective fulfillments to both mass and elite, and plays itself out within what Korzybski termed the "infantilism" of twentieth-century thought and action,[5] where an emphasis on abstraction within present education and the functioning of language and belief provides fertile territory for the paranoid perception.

Unfortunately, much of the contemporary appraisal of *paranoia* as a significant element in this apocalyptic scenario and in American culture as a whole does not move the

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[2]Clive Bush, The Dream of Reason (London 1977), p.3.

[3]Michael Barkun, 'Divided Apocalypse: Thinking About the End in Contemporary America' in Soundings, LXVI, 3 (Fall 1983), p.257.

[4]Barkun, 'Divided Apocalypse,' p.278.

[5]Alfred Korzybski, Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics (1933; Lakeville, CT. 1958), pp.508-525.

debate beyond a focus on and participation in desires for scientific certainty, or a conviction that destructive forms of *paranoia* are an inevitable price to pay in the prevailing social and political conditions. The discourses of the mental sciences continue to refine their nosologies with each new case that aligns itself, and is aligned, within a complex of symptoms and theories intent on integration and exclusivity. Cultural and literary criticism continues to use *paranoia* as a broad and inclusive term, but there has been a sequence of recent studies identifying *paranoia* as a "post-modern" condition, especially in relation to conspiracy theory and the role of *paranoia* in contemporary political systems and narrative forms.[6] These analyses frequently cite the appropriation of meaning or systematization of meaning out of potentially infinite significatory possibilities (the "post-modern text"), especially where that systematization works against and within the implied values of the text, as a perceptual act akin to *paranoia*, if not actually paranoid itself. Where any distinction is drawn between a psychotic and/or debilitating mental condition and that of perception seeking to construct meaning from the materials available, or where the "positive" aspects of such *paranoia* are extolled, participation in a series of post-modern utopian opportunities—according to the theorist at hand—is offered as the means of resistance to disease or malign coercion. As Martin Jay has demonstrated in a recent discussion of the place of *melancholy* in contemporary thought and critical practice, such opportunities might include:

> the more cynical and anti-redemptive postmodernist voices in the apocalyptic chorus...expressed in Lyotard's fascination with libidinal intensities, Derrida's valorization of infinite, unconstrained linguistic play, and Baudrillard's

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[6]See, for instance, Eli Sagan, The Honey and the Hemlock: Democracy and Paranoia in Ancient Athens and Modern America (New York 1991); Ronald K. Siegel, Whispers: The Voices of Paranoia (New York 1994); William Bywater, 'The Paranoia of Postmodernism' in Philosophy and Literature, 14 (1990), pp.79-84; Linda Fisher, 'Hermeneutics of Suspicion and Postmodern Paranoia: Psychologies of Interpretation' in Philosophy and Literature, 16 (1992), pp.106-114; as well as a recent spate of unpublished PhD theses from American universities analysing postmodern fiction, conspiracy theory and *paranoia*.

celebration of the hyperreal world of simulacral overload.[7]

Aside from the internal contradictions of some of these arguments in their treatment of *paranoia*, the most disturbing feature is a political inadequacy in their challenge to the controls placed on information dissemination and the varieties of creative activity within science and the academy. That is, they lack an energised apprehension, or *paranoia*, directed at the regulation of the arts as a conglomeration of activities disruptive to centralised control. Although, of course, they do not aspire to the condition of a politically and creatively challenging poetics, they also do not fulfill what Noam Chomsky, after Dwight MacDonald, terms the "responsibility of intellectuals" where they maintain and sustain an ideological status quo inside the academic establishment, and consequently extend already emplaced forms of justification and permission throughout education, law and government.[8] The notions of resistance to or positive uses of *paranoia* extended from these arguments has little of the intellectual, mythical or physiologically engaging energies offered in the poetics described in Chapter Five.

In another sector of the debate, there are distinct problems in relation to recent discussions about *paranoia* and associated conditions within the so-called "anti-psychiatry" movement. Notwithstanding the effectiveness of the anti-psychiatry challenge to the damaging theory and practice of much of the mental sciences, and, indeed, of the usefulness of the work of analysts such as Deleuze and Guattari for this dissertation, reservations about the wholesale theorization of the value of insanity and disengagement need to be addressed. Joel Kovel has

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[7]Martin Jay, 'The Apocalyptic imagination and the inability to mourn' in ed. Gillian Robinson and John Rundell, Rethinking Imagination: Culture and Creativity (London 1994), p.38.

[8]See Part II of Noam Chomsky, The Chomsky Reader (New York 1987), entitled 'The Responsibility of Intellectuals' which includes the 1966 essay of the same name, as well as "Objectivity and Liberal Scholarship" (1968) and "The Manufacture of Consent" (1984), pp.59-136.

advanced a compelling critique of Deleuze and Guattari's "schizoanalysis" from his perspective as an avowedly Marxist psychiatrist, although, where he states that "the ontology with which [Anti-Oedipus's] arguments are laboriously advanced is so twisted out of shape that it itself qualifies for delusional status,"[9] he misses the point that in the paranoid terrain of psychiatric and political analysis that is precisely their subversive goal. However, Deleuze and Guattari's effort to expose the exercise of paranoid control in contemporary culture and society by identifying liberatory potentials in schizoid states leads in Kovel's understanding to a:

> need to locate emancipatory possibilities deep within the subject to assume a kind of continuity between schizophrenia and normal experience... Yes, there is an amazing uncodable flow to the schizophrenic's inner world—but it occurs at the price of desociation...
>
> In fact, one might turn the argument around. The schizophrenic reveals not emancipation but the negative of emancipation: not free but anti-free. The critical negativity within being—that capacity to refuse the given world while remaining one's self—is demolished and transposed to the zone of non-being, where self as well as world are refused, broken-down, then commingled into the autistic configuration... So far as schizophrenic autism is removed from the everyday, to that degree it has lost the capacity of transforming material reality (including collective human reality) and with it, the only real possibility for emancipation. Schizophrenia, in fact, is hell.[10]

Even with the difficulties associated with the terms "normal" and "self" in these contexts, the thrust of Kovel's argument illuminates the ways in which radical analysis may extend itself too far into a rarefied theoretical (or even evangelical) atmosphere. The value of Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalysis thus lies more in its extraordinary gestural qualities, outlining strategies of resistance to the rigidities of *paranoia* from past examples in culture and science and present energies of mental exploration, becoming a psychiatric poetics at its most

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[9]Joel Kovel, 'Schizophrenic Being and Technocratic Society' in ed. David Michael Levin, Pathologies of the Modern Self: Postmodern Studies on Narcissism, Schizophrenia, and Depression (New York 1987), p.343.

[10]Kovel, 'Schizophrenic Being and Technocratic Society,' p.343-344.

effective moments.

In many ways, the problem presented in Deleuze and Guattari's work is one inextricably tied into Romantic notions linking madness and creativity, especially where the creative act may challenge or be counter to the cultural and political hegemony. Interestingly enough, this was recognized in American psychiatry as early as 1892 at a conference held before the Chicago Academy of Medicine where the debate surrounding Dr James G. Kiernan's paper, 'Art in the Insane,' provoked some enlightening responses. Kiernan argued strongly that artistic manifestations in patients diagnosed insane were the last signs of sanity, or what he called a "conservative element,"[11] rather than the extant and developing theory linking madness and artistic creativity. Much of the artistic evidence Kiernan and others presented as worth considering were the product of what Dr C. B. Burr's categorization of the art of the insane termed "the symbolic and inventive" type of patient characteristically suffering from *paranoia* and chronic delusional forms of mental illness. Most important, however, was the warning from Dr C. G. Craddock that:

> The specialist in any department of science should guard against a narrowness of view necessarily conditioned by his habitual mode of thought. It is a fact that psychiatrists seek to find abnormalities in all minds. This tendency of psychiatric thought is doubtless responsible for the prevalent view that genius is a morbid phenomenon, a manifestation dependent upon neuropathological degeneracy.[12]

A reflexivity of *paranoia* is fleetingly implied, but does not seem to have been followed up in the ensuing practices of much of American psychiatry.

> However, American artists since the American Revolution have long been obsessed

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[11]James G. Kiernan, 'Art in the Insane,' originally published in Alienist and Neurologist, 13 (1892), p.244–275; cited in John M. MacGregor, The Discovery of the Art of the Insane (Princeton, N.J. 1989), p.151.

[12]'Discussion of the Paper on "Art in the Insane"' in Alienist and Neurologist, 13 (1892), p.686; cited in MacGregor, The Discovery of the Art of the Insane, p.153.

with these issues of *paranoia* as they emerge from and intersect with efforts to protect a society deliberately founded on carefully written principles which have then been amended solidly year after year in a proposed condition of republic in revolution. This condition—in which *paranoia* has been rife—has also been one prone to an "eternal reoccurrence," according to Norman O. Brown, where "[p]erpetual conflict is the rule of politics/the reality principle/the world as we know it," and in asking "[i]s there any alternative?" he suggests:

> A metapolitical solution to the problem of madness
> would see politics as madness
> and madness as the solution to politics...
> Madness is even the solution to the problem of madness...
> it is all a problem of communication
> the poet says, Madness is oneness lost
> But oneness regained is madness also.[13]

Again, there is a necessary yet problematic drive in the utopianism of the desire to "find a way of being permanently unstable," for the varying states of conflict within the domestic and international arenas administered by the United States have certainly been forms of permanent instability, at least through the twentieth-century. What Brown is advocating, of course, is a way of achieving metapolitical revolution which could overcome state and individually-fostered conflict as a destructively paranoid means of self-preservation. In this process poetry can be an agency of identifying and making available *non*sense to enable a break out of the "[s]ystematic permanent reified form" and secrets of power, using:

> Poetry [as] the solvent which dissolves
> the vigorous stereotypes of political ideology
> the numb automatism of political reflexes
> the somnambulist gravity of literal believers[14]

In many ways, then, *paranoia* can be seen as the failure of history, yet as Gilbert

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[13]Norman O. Brown, 'From Politics to Metapolitics' in Caterpillar, No.1, 1967, pp.75-76.

[14]Brown, 'From Politics to Metapolitics,' pp.77, 88, 93.

Adair has pointed out *paranoia* is also an essential perceptual and cultural field for epic poetry, particularly in the American scene, where:

> To deny the Fall—to break out of paranoid myth—is the magnificent, harried promise of the American experience... The history the epic includes must indeed be imperialist, and...paranoia is the condition for writing an epic in an age of discontinuities.[15]

However, even as great an epic poet as Robert Duncan, used in this dissertation as an example of a poet capable of deploying *creative paranoia* within his poetics, may have problems with the necessity of mediating *paranoia* in his art. The search for too many connectivities and the insistence or implication of overriding structures may inhibit the metapolitical resistances sought in the poetry. Perhaps it should be sufficient to say that myth operates as forms of representation by which people try and explain where they are. In Duncan's case he occasionally veers towards wanting more than this so that a poem sequence like the 'Structure of Rime' (where "rime" means connections) places movements like the Berkeley free-speech organization of the late 1960s alongside Blake and other events and figures through past and present implying that there is a degree of permanence in the history of social dissent. The anarchist tradition sought by poets like Duncan and Allen Ginsberg offers valuable examples of dissent, but also extends the friction of political *paranoia* to the poetics of their *creative paranoia*, as well as being less than continuous.

What Duncan and Ginsberg do provide as a counter to this understandably paranoid connectivity is a proliferating sense of the need to keep mind open within the systematizing urge, and to avoid the *paranoia* that extends itself in those elements of an exploitative and needlessly competitive American society. Invoking Whitman, Ginsberg has stated "'First

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[15]William Gilbert Adair, 'Epic fiction and imperial content in post-war America,' unpublished PhD thesis, University of London 1990, p.342.

thought, best thought,' that candor ends paranoia,"[16] but on any terms liberation is increasingly hard to locate in the plethora of American liberal capitalist democracy and corporate controls, for in those contexts there is a eulogization and offering of liberty in the ideology of choice and individualism which in fact is largely negated in the transactions of energy and spirit required by the social contracts of much of American life. There is a need also, therefore, to use imagination and justice where the setting up of human rights means their conflict with the rights of others, and it is here that poetics suggests a life of the mind that is capable of mediating the *paranoia* that springs from the American cultures of abundance and difference. That is, mind operating in the basic terms of the Greek etymology, *para—noia*, mind beside itself, but trained in a range of poetics to be so. *paranoia* is only really countered and turned into a positive and creative process by education and self– and socially conscious confrontations of what the social structure of the United States really is, something which may still be extended from those crucial documents, the American Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Arthur Miller describes the prospect in the following terms:

> The opposite of paranoid politics is Law and good faith. An example, the best I know, is the American Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, which de–symbolize the individual and consider him as the sum of his acts rather than his hidden thoughts and propensities for plotting evil.[17]

In an American democracy where the political system rests on all being subject to the law and fulfilling their responsibility, Robert Duncan's poem, 'The Law I Love Is Major Mover,'

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[16]Allen Ginsberg cited in 'Allen Ginsberg, Morality in Media square off over indecency' in Broadcasting, April 23 1990, p.59.

[17]Arthur Miller, 'It Could Happen Here—And Did' in The New York Times, 30 April 1967, section 2, p.17.

provides the crux of the matter in its lines, "Responsibility is to keep/the ability to respond,"[18] as *paranoia* must be mediated by *creative paranoia* in the perceptions of those subjected and those in power. The epigraph to this conclusion from George Quasha is driven both by a sense of the reality of what America (and the world) is and by an optimism which needs to be nurtured. Otherwise, in Charles Olson's warning:

> the present will lose what America is the inheritor of: a secularization which not only loses nothing of the divine but by seeing process in reality redeems all idealism fr theocracy or mobocracy, whether it is rational or superstitious, whether it is democratic or socialism (sic).[19]

What is certain, however, is that the history and effects of *paranoia* continue, and require further analysis.

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[18]Robert Duncan, 'The Law I Love Is Major Mover' in The Opening of the Field (New York 1960), p.10.

[19]Charles Olson, 'The hinges of civilization to be put back on the door' cited in Symposium of the Whole: A Range of Discourse Toward an Ethnopoetics, ed. Jerome & Diane Rothenberg (Berkeley, CA. 1983), p.446.

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